


largely absent from the many studies of medieval memory in which manuscript and narrative history loom large” (16). In fact, one need think only of the numerous publications that in the past thirty years or so have described the construction of institutional memory as a major motive behind the production of medieval ecclesiastical cartularies and of the importance that many scholars have attributed to the inclusion of forged and spurious charters in such documentary collections as part of the creation of a useful past needed to address current issues.

Roach makes a convincing case for the identification of the end of the first millennium as an essential step in the history of forgery, one in which it is possible to witness similar activities taking place across several regions in western Europe, albeit aiming to address different issues: at Worms, Bishop Anno needed to construct a past history for his see’s immunity rights; at Passau, Pilgrim created one of the most famous medieval complexes of forged papal bulls in the (failed) attempt to obtain metropolitan status for his bishopric; at Abingdon, Abbot Wulfgar’s forging activities were directed at restoring land and rights he believed rightly belonged to the monks; at Fleury, Abbo and his successors forged papal bulls to create a long tradition of papal exemption; while at Vercelli, Bishop Leo wrote several diplomas in favor of his see, which Roach treats as specimens of authentic recipient production even though they contain a number of manufactured claims casting Vercelli in the best possible light. Roach deals with each of the five case studies separately but with frequent and elegant cross-referencing, which allows the reader to see both similarities and differences among these forgeries. This is where the reader sees Roach at his best, thanks to his ability to make different documentary collections (and related historiography) speak to each other. Possibly somewhat overstated, however, is the novelty of forgery at the end of the first millennium, as emerges, for instance, from the analysis of the English case in chapter 3. Here Roach claims, “such activity certainly was new” because before the second half of the tenth century “we only know of forgery at Canterbury (and possibly Rochester)” (152). In fact, forgery was certainly also known in Mercia in the early ninth century, as attested by a surviving single sheet (Sawyer no. 59), which is preserved in the cathedral church of Worcester, where it was produced.

In a book covering so much ground, both geographically and metaphorically, it is, however, inevitable that any reviewer will notice statements with which they take issue. These should not detract from the significant achievement that *Forgery and Memory at the End of the First Millennium* represents. Roach describes it as “an exercise in serial microhistory” (19), but it is probably more than that, with his careful weaving of diplomatic and paleographical analysis (which, incidentally, would have sometimes needed larger illustrations than those provided) with detailed historical and historiographical discussion. What this reader remains unsure about is whether Roach has succeeded in his “attempt to discuss the material in a manner accessible to the non-specialist” (xv), or even whether any author could succeed in such an attempt given the complex technicalities that any discussion of these materials must address. Not all books can be written for nonspecialists, but this does not make them any less important.

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EDMOND SMITH. *Merchants: The Community that Shaped England’s Trade and Empire*. New Haven: Yale University Press, 2021. Pp. 376. \$32.50 (cloth).  
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Long-distance seaborne trade was fraught with peril in the early modern period. These perils ranged from the more obvious and immediate dangers of storms, sickness, and shipwreck to

things associated with logistics and networks such as finding reliable information on ever-changing market conditions, creating networks manned by trustworthy servants, and navigating a variety of jurisdictions. Given the many obstacles to successful trading ventures, why did people do it? Perhaps more importantly, how did thousands of English merchants manage to launch successful ventures between 1550 and 1650 and forever alter both England's relations with the rest of the world and its place in the world? For Edmond Smith, as he explains in *Merchants: The Community that Shaped England's Trade and Empire*, the answer is the "sense of community" (3) that developed among merchants during a century that fostered a distinct mercantile professional identity including common values, rules, beliefs, norms, and organizational practices. In this way, Smith focuses on merchants as a social group rather than recounting the heroic exploits of specific individuals. With *Merchants*, Smith makes an important contribution to an ever-growing body of scholarly work on merchants, trading companies, and the origins of empire.

Smith focuses the main body of the book on the ways that merchants and corporations built and sustained the institutional structures necessary to support long-distance trade from 1550 to 1650, a time when England's economic output from trade quadrupled. Smith's goal is to show that this tremendous growth in trade was a cultural and social phenomenon as much as it was economic. While economics does figure into the argument, most of the research on economics comes from secondary sources from the 1950s and 1960s, when economic history was more in vogue in English historiography. Therefore, the bulk of Smith's primary source research comes from records associated with merchants and corporations such as correspondence between merchants, diplomatic correspondence, meeting minutes, and corporate charters. A major strength of the research is the number of local archives that Smith consulted, which provides a broader view of merchant activity in this period than would a focus on one particular merchant corporation or just London.

Smith does an excellent job of showing just how important creditable conduct was in establishing trade networks and protecting against accusation of fraud and misconduct. Trust, it seems, was the key ingredient to the significant changes in England's mercantile fortunes, and trust was something that took time and effort to build. For merchants, the building of networks of trust began at a young age with apprenticeships, during which they gained common education and training and first encountered the traditions and common practices of merchandizing. The education of young merchants culminated with becoming full members of trading corporations, which, unsurprisingly, figure prominently in the narrative. Trading corporations formed the institutional backbone of the English merchant community and created the networks of trust and credit so crucial to long-distance trade. Corporations created their own unique "way of life" (59)—they were social in nature, had their own customs, and had a clear hierarchy that maintained orderly behavior. Smith shows monopoly trading companies, long a target of derision from contemporaries and economic historians alike, to be a logical extension of the need to limit access to trade networks to those who demonstrated that they could follow the rules and build trust and credit, rather than an irrational relic of an era that just did not understand economics. This is a significant and important argument.

Smith's stated goal for *Merchants* is to "trace the foundations of our modern, capitalist, and global world" (5). While the book may be too short and too focused on England to accomplish that goal completely, it certainly makes an important contribution to a greater understanding of the history of capitalism and globalization. While the main focus of the book is on the social and cultural aspects of merchant life, politics does seem to get short shrift. Merchant corporations were political animals that often had to engage with the state in various political arenas whether it was Parliament or the Privy Council. While Smith's point that institutions merchants created to foster trust and credit were not driven "by the state or a centralised authority" is well taken (13), nevertheless the state was there and merchants had to interact with it in order to maintain the monopolies that Smith argues were so important to creating a sense of community. In the end, Smith makes an important contribution to the field of early

modern trade and trading companies, and *Merchants* should be read by any scholars interested in the history of capitalism, globalization, and corporations.

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ANNA SURANYI. *Indentured Servitude: Unfree Labour and Citizenship in the British Colonies*. States, People, and the History of Social Change 4. Montreal: McGill-Queens University Press, 2021. Pp. 288. \$37.95 (paper).  
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Although the title is coy about dates, Anna Suranyi's *Indentured Servitude: Unfree Labour and Citizenship in the British Colonies* is about the seventeenth century. Indicating this in the title would have been helpful, because indentured servitude continued in the 1800s and 1900s, when it came to be applied to people of color from British colonies such as China and India. Suranyi explores the early decades of indentured servitude, when it applied strictly to white English, Scottish, and Irish subjects. McGill-Queens is to be commended for publishing a book on early modern history, which is too often eclipsed by its more glamorous sister, modern history. The book is manageable in terms of length, affordable in its paperback form, and accessible in terms of its writing style. It makes for an engaging read.

A significant omission is a historiography section or an explicit effort to situate this study within the historiography in the field. Suranyi has read widely in the scholarship on early modern indentured servitude (as is evident in the endnotes), and she does articulate a compelling central argument about indentured servitude being predicated on rights that helped develop ideas of citizenship on both sides of the Atlantic. But it is not clear whether this is the book's original contribution to the field.

Indentured servants were unfree laborers bound by contract to serve, without pay, in the colonies for a duration of time ranging from four to seven years (longer in some cases). Some entered service voluntarily, some were coerced as punishment for vagrancy, criminal offenses, or political rebellion. At the end of their contract, servants could obtain their freedom and receive "freedom dues" (p. 7) in the form of land, tools, clothes, or commodities. Men, women, and children all became indentured servants, though men were the most desirable.

Suranyi is eager to correct the recent notion promoted by some scholars of Irish history that there was no significant difference between servitude and slavery. Like slaves, indentured servants were sold from the decks of ships. Slaves and servants often worked side by side under similar labor conditions. But there the similarity ended. When their contract was fulfilled, indentured servants would be set free and be given freedom dues. While in service, servants had a right to decent food and clothing, medical care, and recourse to the law if mistreated. While masters and mistresses were allowed to beat their servants, they were not allowed to whip them naked or cause permanent harm, kill, rape, or maim them. Slaves had no such protection. One of the most striking rights servants enjoyed was the right to appeal to court. It was understood servants had no money, so the court would remit their court fees and appoint an attorney for them. These court appointed attorneys took this work seriously and did a good job defending servants. Servants of both sexes brought cases to court, and there are many examples of servants winning cases.

Despite these rights, the life of a servant was quite hard. If the first half of the book explores how servants were citizens, the second half of the book bears witness to their suffering. Many of the stories Suranyi has collected here make for harrowing reading. This is especially the case