

not advance our knowledge of the transatlantic Moriscos a great deal; nor does it shed much light on the Muslim specter in the Spanish colonies, despite Cook's protests that she is contributing to an imperial discourse, illuminating liminal space, negotiated status, and passing and crossing in colonial society. These heuristic buzzwords apart, the study remains fairly pedestrian.

The problem for Cook is that the New World Moriscos were not members of large, homogeneous communities, like their Spanish counterparts, but individuals who crossed the Atlantic to make better lives for themselves. We have no idea of the size of this population, but it was probably quite small and isolated. There is no evidence here to suggest the kind of Morisco networks that were present in sixteenth-century Spain, and which scholars are now investigating with such interesting results. Cook tells us that there was an increase in Morisco settlement in the New World in the late sixteenth century, in a period when the Spanish government was considering forced expulsion of the Morisco community from the peninsula. But her archival research provides no information on this influx or its effects on the Americas. It merely confirms that the Moriscos were present in small numbers and remained religiously discreet throughout the period.

Cook's account of Moriscos in Spain and the New World is clearly told and interesting enough for the casual reader. But there is nothing historiographically innovative here, and thus little to detain the informed scholar.

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*Promettre, confesser, s'obliger: Devant Pierre Christofle, notaire royal à Orléans (1437).* Kouky Fianu.

Mémoires et documents de l'École des chartes 103. Paris: École des chartes, 2016. 466 pp. €29.50.

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This book offers an edition of the 1437 register of the royal notary Pierre Christofle, with a lengthy introduction, photographs and transcriptions of selected documents, an extensive bibliography, and indexes of the types of acts, subjects, and proper names. Given the significant numbers of notarial registers in archival collections of Europe, there are few editions, relatively speaking. The present modern edition reveals the extraordinary wealth of information contained in just one notarial register, presenting in a sense a slice of life and a window on the world of the French royal town of Orléans in 1437. This is a labor-intensive work, dependent on expert paleography, and reflecting the state of the art in editions of medieval works. In addition to the hard copy, it is featured as number twenty-seven of the electronic editions of the École des chartes.

The Mediterranean notarial tradition dates from the twelfth century, due to the strong influence of a written-law / Roman-law tradition. Royal notaries were introduced later in the north of France, and notarial registers multiplied at Orléans from the late

fourteenth century. Kouky Fianu sees the rise of notarial acts under the authority of the provost reflecting the decline of episcopal authority and the ascension of royal power. Orléans royal notaries, attached to the Châtelet, also served as judicial officers, writing down oral proceedings, handling inquests and judicial documents, and recopying acts. They performed the same function in municipal affairs and served as municipal procureurs. They were not jurists, in spite of the presence of a law school at Orléans, but served rather as witnesses delegated by the provost. The fifteenth century was an era when royal justice and episcopal justice were contesting judicial authority. Fianu invokes Jean Juvenal des Ursins, who argued for the primacy of ecclesiastical justice in cases where there was faith, oath, and promise, but she asserts that the notary's influence was growing as a royal instrument of peace and social order.

This volume contains a chart of the 387 acts of the Christoffle register, detailing the great variety of acts (minutes) and their numbers. Most numerous were the contracts establishing obligations—eighty-six in total, with acquittals coming next in number at fifty-seven, and sales at forty-four in third place. Acts relating to family matters were few in number: two wills, one guardianship, one curatorship, three marriage contracts, and four dower contracts. There were five apprenticeships and five work contracts. The author does not focus extensively on the content of these acts, and, finding no evidence of the consultation of the register's acts on a conflict or of their reference in the two judicial registers closest in date to 1437, turns her attention to a social interpretation of the notarial acts. While she is not the first to attempt such an analysis, hers is an innovative and thorough investigation of the social ties that notarial acts reveal.

Building on her interpretation of notarial acts as creating a social tie and arguing that it is necessary to observe the medieval notary through a medieval lens, she considers the formulaic language of the acts with their use of confession, love, peace, oaths, and renunciations. At Orléans the use of the notary was voluntary—there were other options, and Fianu argues that the notary provided a gracious jurisdiction as opposed to a contentious jurisdiction. Those who chose to use the notary wanted to hear themselves, to obtain consensus, publicity, and legitimacy. Recourse to the notary could bring about the public resolution of a conflict. Fianu identifies chains of acts in which the first entry was modified or even annulled by subsequent notes (letters and counterletters).

Fianu calls for future research agendas, such as the creation of a prosopography of notaries. The role of the notary in molding the law, in even creating the law through the construction of documents of practice, does not figure in Fianu's interpretation. She sees him rather as a modifier of the social and economic behavior of a society, that of Orléans. This book invites greater comparative work between north and south and further exploration of Fianu's approach. It also offers students of fifteenth-century Orléans the possibility of delving into the fabric of the town through the social, economic, and legal records that Pierre Christoffle created.

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