

twentieth century, until they finally realized that assumption was wrong—setting the discipline back to square one (pp. 120-123). The other fantastic example of Hutton’s exemplary historiography is the case of “the Wild Hunt,” a folkloric belief which permeated witchcraft scholarship, but which in fact originated from a single text, Jacob Grimm’s *Deutsche Mythologie* (1835).

These personal and academic biases are still very much a problem in the discipline today, and one who has not carefully studied the folklore of their chosen region can easily rely on preconceived notions of who is and who is not likely to be accused of witchcraft. Hutton’s careful deconstruction of past scholarship and his emphasis on why certain eras of scholarship emphasized certain ideas are important interventions for anyone considering the field of witchcraft and magic studies.

This book will be both useful and interesting for a range of readers, both the researcher who is specifically interested in early modern witchcraft as well as the casual reader who simply wants to learn more about early modern witchcraft and folkloric belief. It also has a number of potential classroom applications, particularly for graduate seminars. For graduate students entering the field of witchcraft history, this book is not to be missed.

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LAMBOURN, Elizabeth A. – *Abraham’s Luggage: A Social Life of Things in the Medieval Indian Ocean World*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2018. Pp. 318.

Ever since the publication of the India Book extracted from the Cairo Genizah by S. D. Goitien and its fictional telling by Amitav Ghosh, the Genizah repository, replete with enchanting epistles, mysterious fragments of manifests, and trade lists, has held infinite promise for historians and their readers. *Abraham’s Luggage* does not disappoint; indeed, Lambourn opens for us a fascinating story of what it meant to carry goods and how life-stories, personalities, and spaces were packed into luggage that made its way through the trading world of the Indian Ocean. From a micro historical analysis of a luggage list studied in relation to a dense corpus of material on the India trade run by Jewish merchants, the author goes past the apparently confusing and even incongruous jumble of items to an exploration of what it meant to live as a trader who sojourned to the Malabar coast, lived multiple lives in Malabar, in Aden, and in transit; what it meant to eat in a society where access to daily and divine foods was restricted; and what material choices dictated the aesthetics of setting up home. The introduction takes the reader to an evocative analysis of what packing and making a luggage list involved and of what meaning and function it had for the premodern traders inhabiting and navigating the complex world of the Indian Ocean. In the process, Lambourn

transforms a piece of paper catalogued for modern researchers as T-S NS 324.114 into a bioscope of fascinating meanings, images, and reflections.

The protagonist of the book is not so much Abraham Bin Yejju, whose luggage list is parsed by Lambourne, as it is his habitus in Malabar. Abraham appears almost as a generic category standing for the medieval Jewish merchant who operated a dynamic trade, made use of formal and informal networks, and sorted out his personal and social relations during his sojourning days. What makes the book so impressive is the way it reconstructs the material life of traders through a close reading of objects and their arrangement, apparently chaotic, but actually adhering to a pattern. The book is organized around two broad sections, one looking at a Mediterranean society in Malabar and the other a Mediterranean society at sea, and it takes up issues of ritual and secular consumption, organization of space, and the actual provisioning for travel. It is an impressive piece of archival interpretation and reconstruction, and it demonstrates the working of historical method ground up from fragments and their dynamic with a larger cluster of documents. In some ways the method departs from the way microhistory works in the cause of global history—it is not the stuff of global microhistories that Francesca Trivallato spoke of in her *California Italian Studies* article “Is there a Future for Italian Microhistory in the Age of Global History?” (2011) wherein a narrative holds a mirror to the larger story of connections and contradictions and takes up the challenges of dominant and hegemonic views without the burden of excessive theorization. Lambourn’s method is not to track the exploits and eccentricities of Abraham but to read the assemblage of objects that he packed for his sojourn in Malabar and at sea alongside a cluster of other documents making up the India Book to deepen our understanding of the way medieval Jewish traders lived in India, furnished their homes, prayed and ate on special occasions, and made the necessary provisions for food—for ritual and for everyday consumption.

The book starts with a luggage list—a heterogenous list with 173 items specifying food, furnishing, gunny bags, cash and carpets, textiles and pots, rat traps, and oil—and follows this up by an evocative analysis of what it means to pack a bag for a journey and a sojourn. In luggage making lies the key to what constitutes life choices and preferences. In other words, it embodied continuities of the past in a world of mobility and movement. The list is not just a random assemblage of goods to be traded, transshipped, or consumed, but a mirror to see how the passenger expected to live and work, how he shopped to organize his home, how he ate and combined flavors to ensure his ritual and aesthetic compulsions.

It is through the unpacking of the luggage list and its juxtaposition to other archival fragments and interpretive readings that Lambourne sketches the social world of transactions in which Abraham, a North-African Jewish trader, participated. Sailing out of Mahdiya to take up sojourn in Malabar in 1132, Abraham planned carefully to set up his home and ensure provisioning for necessities. A middle-eastern adventurer, he sought his fortunes in the high value trade of the Indian Ocean, was attached to the port city of Mahdiya, and enjoyed the benefits of a scribal and religious education. We are not sure how Abraham

penetrated the Jewish network and its India trade, but it is clear that like his fellow men, he capitalized on the development of an oceanic policy in the Indian Ocean by the Fatimid power, nurtured connections with important and influential associates in his community to emerge as a significant intermediary trader. He sailed out of Aden to arrive in Malabar in 1132—in Mangalore, to be precise, which had already by this time emerged as a key port in the trade with west Asia. Abraham operated as an intermediary between local suppliers of spices, areca, and pepper and his colleagues in Aden who exported gold, silver, tin, and copper. He entered into local alliances, emancipated his maid servant, married her, and made a small home for himself—a life decision that played a key role in his luggage-making skills.

What can a luggage list do for an economic historian? How do we read its contents and how do we connect it to other documents to make sense of the complex social relations that were embedded in the making of a trading community and its location? Lambourne provides answers by dipping into a material history of objects and by reading the list in conjunction with other texts. The exercise of interpretive reading immediately broadens the scope of analysis—it raises questions about Jewish patterns of consumption, what choices the community had in order to conform to the ritual imperatives and in order to manage social relations in a home away from home. Thus, she explains why certain staples made their way into the list, how certain goods had to be provisioned under *subha* or an informal one-to-one relationship. A fascinating foray is also made into food and culinary practices, keeping in mind the apparent Jewishness of the list. The chapter entitled “Making a Meal of It” is rich in details, especially as it aligns the list of foodstuffs in Abraham’s luggage with travel accounts like those of Ibn Battuta to speculate on hybrid food cultures that crystallized in the enclaves of foreign traders in Malabar, a hospitable environment even if its weather was not conducive to either wine or wheat. Necessity and opportunity enabled a creative mélange of local and global influences, anxieties about securing items such as wine and wheat and the availability of coconut, fish, rice, and raisins gave rise to new culinary possibilities. How alternative infusions were experimented with, like raisin juice for instance, or why certain kinds of cooking pots were used suggest important personal choices that Abraham made. It is likely that he taught his local wife Yemeni cooking practices. The chapter raises more questions than it answers, but the enquiry in itself suggests the potential richness in a material approach to goods and objects in circulation in the Indian Ocean.

The second section of the book looks at Abraham’s list from the viewpoint of a sea journey and the bare necessities this involved. Adopting a biological nutritional approach to the requirements of nourishment and hydration that a sea journey warranted, the author critically revisits the available secondary literature on life at sea to speculate on Abraham’s empty bottles and water skins to carry potable water to consider the challenges of measuring gunny bags that contained rice. The most compelling reconstruction is the space and postural culture at sea in the cabin that accommodated chairs and beds. As the author admits, we know very little about sitting and sleeping practices in the western Indian Ocean, but the

fact that Abraham had mats imported into India suggest that he, like his fellow men, travelled in his cabin seated on mats. Other small items reflect procedures of cooking and fishing and help us with an analysis that goes far beyond the evident deconstruction of ephemera.

In its reconstruction of one major list and in nesting it within a larger cluster of documents, the book offers an exemplary illustration of the potential that microhistory offers for undertaking large social histories of circulation of men and objects in the Indian Ocean. It gives us a rich and empirical picture of hybridity and mobility in India and in the Middle East just as it helps us position the Indian trade within a supramacro context connecting the Islamic Mediterranean and South Asia. It offers an exemplary demonstration of reading objects as history, inscribing meanings onto traces, thereby persuading historians to engage with archeology for unravelling the mysteries of premodern trade and circulation. Even if, occasionally, one misses the pleasures of a narrative that foregrounds the eccentric individual battling his destiny, one is reassured by the certitude that object-oriented histories convey of periods and worlds that seem otherwise inaccessible.

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LEGACEY, Erin-Marie – *Making Space for the Dead. Catacombs, Cemeteries, and the Reimagining of Paris, 1780–1830*, Ithaca, Cornell University Press, 2019, 216 p.

Fondé sur des recherches dans plusieurs fonds d'archives (Archives nationales, Institut, etc.) et sur le dépouillement de diverses sources imprimées, dont une demi-douzaine de journaux, cet ouvrage entend conduire ses lecteurs dans une série de promenades à travers Paris, macabres ou romantiques c'est selon. Il aborde la question de la mort avant, pendant et après la Révolution française, en tentant d'analyser comment cette dernière s'insère dans une crise préexistante des cimetières parisiens et, surtout, comment apparaît une nouvelle culture des inhumations après la « terreur », symbolisée entre autres par le nouvel espace des morts créé au Père-Lachaise, par l'organisation de visites dans les catacombes ou encore par cette espèce de « musée des morts » inséré par Alexandre Lenoir dans son Musée des Monuments français. Une importante bibliographie accompagne ce travail, même si çà et là se remarquent quelques manques pour les écrits en langue française : ceux de Michel Vovelle ici limités à un seul ouvrage, les travaux de Richard Cobb ou de Dominique Godineau sur le suicide, mon propre ouvrage sur les Conventionnels décédés de mort non naturelle, autant d'écrits qui auraient pu nourrir la réflexion de l'auteure sur la culture de la mort et ses aspects politiques, à défaut d'ajouter des détails sur ces promenades d'un genre si particulier dans le Paris des XVIII^e et XIX^e siècles.