(be)comes home" (103). This play, Andrea argues, reveals English worries over the "potential absorption" (103) of England in the face of expansion by otherness. Through a close study of "masques of blackness" (99), Andrea offers a compelling reading of the theatrical denigration of black bodies that threaten the purity of English monarchy.

Andrea's final chapter returns to her previous work on Teresa Sampsonia, or Lady Sherley (the wife of the famed English traveler turned Persian representative, Robert Sherley). She revisits this figure by drawing connections to Mariam Khanim. The daughter of an Armenian nobleman, Khanim was brought to England as a result of her first marriage to an English East India Company agent before his untimely death; she likely lived in London as a result of her subsequent marriage to Gabriel Towerson, a captain of an East India Company fleet (126). Bringing together references to Khanim and the more well-known Lady Sherley, Andrea's study ends with the powerful claim that the scattered accounts of Islamic girls and women not only remind us of their important impact on English self-fashioning but also demonstrate "rare evidence of the camaraderie of women from the Islamic world who landed in England during this transitional period and who faced common challenges" (129). This book, therefore, alerts scholars to the uncovered narratives yet to be discovered about gendered subalterns, who reveal more about transnational encounters in the early modern period than scholars have accounted for.

Black Tudors: The Untold Story. By MIRANDA KAUFMANN. London: Oneworld Publications, 2017. Illus. Pp. viii + 376.

Reviewed by NOÉMIE NDIAYE

Black Tudors is Miranda Kaufmann's first book and a bold attempt at capturing the lives of early modern black Britons. Kaufmann sets out to answer three questions: "Why and how did [Africans] come to England? How were they treated? What were their lives like?" (3). And she argues, in substance, that racial difference did not influence the treatment of Africans in Tudor England: "When Africans arrived in England as ambassadors, they were treated as such, but when they arrived aboard a captured ship, they found themselves at the bottom of the pile. Those who had skills, such as musicians, sailors or craftsmen, fared better. In many ways their lives were no worse than those of the vast majority of Tudors: 'nasty, brutish and short,' but this was the result of having no social standing, not of having dark skin" (5–6).

Kaufmann comes to that conclusion by reconstructing the unavoidably fragmentary biographies of seven African men and three African women who lived in England from the mid-sixteenth century to the 1620s. Some of her case studies will be familiar to readers: they include Reasonable Blackman, the silk weaver who lived in Southwark in the 1580s; John Blanke, the trumpeter famously represented in the Westminster Tournament Roll; Diego, the circumnavigator featured in Sir

William Davenant's operatic tableau *The History of Sir Francis Drake*; and Dederi Jaquoah, the prince of River Cestos, who was christened at St. Mildred Poultry in 1611 and might have informed Shakespeare's Caliban, as Roslyn Knutson suggested nearly thirty years ago. Yet most of the case studies considered in this book will be new, even to specialists. They include Jacques Francis, the salvage diver who worked for an Italian merchant in Southampton in the 1540s; Anne Cobbie, "the tawny Moor with soft skin" (219) who worked in a brothel in 1620s Westminster; and Cattelena of Almondsbury, the independent single woman who made a living off of her cow and died in 1625 in the county of Gloucester. To reconstruct their biographies, Kaufmann meticulously combed "parish registers (which record baptisms, marriages and burials) and other church records, tax returns, household accounts, legal records, wills and inventories, diaries, letters, State papers and voyage accounts" (273). Her careful archival work provides new data that scholars interested in early modern racial formations will certainly find valuable.

I particularly appreciated the attention that Kaufmann paid to gender and geographic variety as she picked her ten case studies. Focusing on three women, and on cases that are not limited to London but range from Southampton to Plymouth, Dover, and the countryside, she paints a diverse picture of Black Tudor life. *Black Tudors* also has the merit of studying the African presence in England in a resolutely transnational framework, by placing the lives of the protagonists against a background that includes the expansive networks of the slave trade in the Iberian Atlantic starting at the end of the fifteenth century; the existence of the Freedom Principle in contemporary France; and various commercial, diplomatic, and military exchanges or rivalries between England and Spain. Kaufmann helps widen the geographic lens of early modern race scholarship—an ongoing endeavor in the field. Finally, *Black Tudors* includes a good selection of well-known but conveniently gathered iconographic documents, which, together with clear and lively prose, make the book extremely readable.

Indeed, Kaufmann—who has published several short pieces related to her work in British media outlets, including the *Times Literary Supplement*, *The Times*, *The Guardian*, and the *BBC History Magazine*—is writing largely for a nonspecialist audience. Without a doubt, our troubled times need more public intellectuals and more outreach projects aimed at bridging the gap between the public sphere and scholarly conversations on race and racial history. For this reason, it is regrettable that Kaufmann here does not engage with the specialized work produced in the interdisciplinary field of early modern race studies over the last thirty years, and does not position her work in relation to her most obvious scholarly interlocutors: Onyeka's *Blackamoores: Africans in Tudor England, Their Presence, Status and Origins* ([London?]: Narrative Eye, 2013) and Imtiaz Habib's *Black Lives in the English Archives, 1500–1677: Imprints of the Invisible* (New York: Routledge, 2008). Engaging with the work of her colleagues in early modern race studies might have helped Kaufmann pick her battles better. Indeed, Kaufmann announces in the book's introduction that she is committed to debunking two misconceptions: the idea—apparently widespread in the UK—that there were no Africans in England prior to 1948 "when the *Empire Windrush* docked at Tilbury"

(1); and the idea that, if there were any Black Tudors, they must have been enslaved. One would be hard pressed in 2018 to find early modernists who have not heard about the existence of Black Tudors, or who take slavery to be the main paradigm defining interracial power relations in sixteenth-century England. A narrow focus on institutional slavery leads Kaufmann to ignore more subtle forms of interracial power play that have been and will continue to be more interesting than slavery to specialists of English early modern race studies, especially those versed in critical race theory.

At its core, the political project that animates *Black Tudors* is laudable. Kaufmann articulates that project in the book's conclusion: "As debate about immigration becomes ever more vituperative and divisive, it is vital to understand that the British Isles have always been peopled with immigrants" (262). Kaufmann believes that writing the Tudor period as a period of intercultural contact when black Britons were treated no better and no worse than white Britons is what progressive historiography means, because it shows that racism is neither inevitable nor deeply ingrained in British society. Yet this political commitment leads Kaufmann to interpret the archival material she collected through a positive lens that disregards elements pointing to the existence of racial discrimination and prejudice in the period—of which there are plenty, even in the very materials she cites. Nowhere is this bias more obvious than when Kaufmann speculates that "some of the many Africans whose occupations are not recorded could also have been financially independent" (133), making black autonomy her default setting for reading silent archival records. This default setting seems merely wishful when juxtaposed with Habib's finding that "there is not a single record in the Elizabethan period that shows an African in an independent professional capacity" (*Black Lives in the English Archives*, 78).

A final issue that Shakespeareans will encounter in *Black Tudors* is its reductive understanding of the cultural work effected by theater and literature in early modern England. Kaufmann sprinkles each chapter with welcome allusions to well-known plays from the Tudor period, especially *Othello*, yet she asserts in the introduction that, "although much has been written on the question of racism in Shakespeare's *Othello*, we mustn't forget that it was a work of fiction designed to entertain, and so must be set alongside archival evidence of how Africans were treated in England's churches, households and law courts" (2). By suggesting that literary texts do not constitute archival evidence, Kaufmann is able to discount the various forms of interracial prejudices and power play that ooze from the literary canon. Allow literary and cultural studies scholars steeped in New Historicism to answer in unison: while "designed to entertain," drama was not made out of thin air but of the ambient cultural expectations, fears, and desires that it simultaneously materialized and transformed. Moreover, nonliterary archives, full of gaps as they are, consistently fail to answer questions of motive and intent; they do *not* tell us how early modern Africans were perceived, and literature is all we have to fill in their gaps and silences. Ironically, Kaufmann's own decision to open each of her ten analytical chapters with a story—a paragraph-long fictional narrative written from the viewpoint of the chapter's black protagonist (a cross-racial ventriloquism

act, really)—acknowledges the impossibility of discarding literature for any scholarly project that aims at touching the racial past.

Black Tudors is an engaging introduction to the lives of early modern Afro-Britons. While many of us will certainly use some of Kaufmann's valuable archival findings in our research, I closed *Black Tudors* with a distinct feeling that, for all its merits, it represents a missed opportunity.