

A double-page map and description precedes each group, with references to publications on its art, religion and history. Individual catalogue entries pay scrupulous attention to object history supplemented by a descriptive, interpretative and referenced text. Many of the items which bear HAW, TAH or NZ numbers were probably brought back by Sir Joseph Banks or Cook's voyages, but were not catalogued until the 1890s, by which time their documentation was lost.

Three essays precede the catalogue and supplement it with illustrations of contemporary paintings and objects not in the exhibition. We are told that the aim of the book is to place the objects in the forefront of research and to show how a study of material culture can enhance understanding, 'If this publication and these objects succeed in evoking awe, wonder and above all respect, then an important task will have been accomplished'. Certainly the photographs achieve this, allowing the reader to appreciate the care and refinement with which these artefacts were made at the point of European contact using new tools and ideas. 'Encountering Polynesia' outlines the different contacts made by Polynesian seafarers, their inter-island voyages and their recent voyaging in replica canoes. 'Polynesian Encounters' investigates the significance of these objects to Polynesian peoples in the context of religion, chieftainship and gift exchange. The third essay, 'Collecting Polynesia', shows that these populations were not static recipients of European visits, but themselves undertook voyages of exchange and communication which continued after Europeans arrived on their shores eager to barter nails, whale teeth and cloth for water, food, sex and 'curiosities'. The British were the most active collectors; along with Spanish, French and, later, Russian and American traders they visited, described and took away timber, *bêche-de-mer* and exotic souvenirs. Much damage and deliberate destruction of images was done by missionaries from the last quarter of the 18th century, but they sent captured idols back to Europe for fundraising and display in mission museums. The growth of national collections and acquisition of major collections is outlined, noting the current ethical and political debates about ownership.

For the readers of the *Journal* the first chapter, in which the author offers 'a few reflections' on one type of artefact which Polynesians and Europeans had in common—boats—will be of interest. The largest Tahitian, Ra'iatean and Tongan canoes were longer than *Endeavour* and were similarly plank-built. The draught plan and section of *Britannia*, the 33-m-long Tahitian war canoe, launched in 1774 during Cook's visit and named at his request, was drawn by William Palmer (fig. 5), while a naval review of more than 160 war canoes was depicted several times by William Hodges (fig. 1). Recent re-creations of ancient voyages 'have reached every major group in Polynesia, including Easter Island ... and have awakened an intense interest

in Polynesian history, migrations and cultural relations'. The latest hypothesis is that 'there was a burst of voyaging over vast areas of the Pacific in a relatively short space of time—the three centuries or so prior to AD 1000'. New Zealand was settled last, around AD 1100–1200.

One of the first artefacts to be brought back to Europe was no. 121, a 4-m fishing canoe lashed to the deck of the *Dolphin* in 1767. It was collected from an island with poor timber resources, Nukutavake in the Tuamotus, and has no fewer than 45 wooden components neatly sewn with plaited coir over covering battens made from coconut-leaf midrib. The state of preservation is extraordinary. The catalogue notes 'No commentator has remarked on the broken figure, whose flattened legs are carved on either side of the stem'. Old Rarotongan canoes have not survived. Thus no. 196, a 68-cm-high carving with three fixing holes on the bottom and probably a stem board, is of particular interest, as is no. 197 from another Cook Island. It is a wooden stem figure probably cut from the prow or stem of a canoe like one figured by Hornell from Atiu. Nos 100 and 101 are small detachable prow sculptures from the Marquesas Islands, while no. 64 is a large, exquisitely-carved canoe prow from New Zealand of a type which disappeared in the early-19th century.

The items which follow are a curvaceous canoe bailer, and a carved and painted paddle, probably depicted in a painting by Sidney Parkinson in 1771. From the Society Islands are two finely made canoe-building tools, no. 146, a massive stone adze (*to'i*) bound to a 60-cm-long wooden haft, and no. 147, a small bone chisel such as would have been used to make holes for sewing canoes. Nos 42–44 are superb fish-hooks from the Hawaiian Islands, which can be compared with hooks and lures elsewhere in the catalogue. A poignant item, no. 46, was probably brought back by James King, who took over command of *Discovery* in 1749. It is a small wooden bat edged with shark's teeth, still bearing an ancient label, 'A Knife of Sandwich Islands with a knife of this kind Capt. Cook was cut to pieces.'

Following the catalogue there are brief biographies of collectors, dealers and institutions, an extensive bibliography and an index.

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Pirates: Flibuste et Piraterie dans le Caribe et les Mers du Sud 1522–1725

JEAN-PIERRE MOREAU

480 pp., 2 b&w illustrations, 6 maps

Tallandier, 4 rue du Texel, Paris 75014, 2006, €21 (sbk), ISBN 2-84734-229-X

X Marks the Spot: The Archaeology of Piracy

(*New Perspectives on Maritime History & Nautical Archaeology*)

RUSSELL K. SKOWRONEK and CHARLES R. EWEN (eds), with 13 contributors

384 pp., 153 b&w illustrations, 20 tables

University Press of Florida, 15 NW 15th Street, Gainesville, FL 32611-2079, 2006, \$59.95 (hbk), ISBN 1-8130-2875-2

These two books deal with the mythical and exciting world of piracy, which has been the subject of so many novels and movies, from two complementary viewpoints: the one historical and the other archaeological. As Charles R. Ewen, one of the authors of *X Marks the Spot*, states on the first page, the word ‘pirates’ conjures images that were formed during childhood. Jean-Pierre Moreau, the author of *Pirates*, also avows his childhood passion for the stories of Long John Silver or the adventures of Tintin and Captain Haddock finding and rescuing the treasure of the *Licorne*. From that viewpoint, these two books are a lot of fun. Both prove, however, from their different standpoints, that there is neither an archaeology of pirates’ lairs and ships, nor a history of piracy.

No matter how much we enjoyed reading about Jim Hawkins hiding in the apple barrel or following the adventures of Jack Sparrow in the recent Hollywood trilogy, as we grow up we realize that it is not possible to trace a clear line between pirates and kings. It is only a matter of scale. History shows that to invade somebody’s space and forcibly rob their possessions is only considered a crime if one does not have a regular army and some political claim. Sometimes it is not even a matter of scale: privateers working for kings or princes have been an integral part of many honourable and just wars. And this is precisely the idea that stems from both books. From the historian’s viewpoint, in the words of Paul Butel who writes the preface to Moreau’s book, *Pirates* is an essential contribution to the history of the establishment of Europeans in the Caribbean. From the archaeologist’s viewpoint, Skowronek and Ewen can only argue that ‘archaeologically derived information provides measurable units of comparison that are useful in determining the role of piracy and illicit trade in the Spanish colonial world’.

Moreau’s book is divided into four parts. The first, accounting for almost half the book, is a history of the development of French—as well as Dutch and English—privateering in the New World, from the first decades of Spanish occupation to the beginning of the 18th century. Moreau’s prose is clear and flows quickly under our eyes, making it a very pleasant read. The second part deals with the involvement of the French

Atlantic west-coast harbours, including those of the Bay of Biscay, and consists of an inventory of known pirates and a short account of their exploits. The third section, ‘What a privateer must know before setting out to the sea’, starts with an explanation of certain juridical formalities related to the business under analysis, such as permits and fees. It moves on to the profitability of this activity and some good advice on provisioning, arming and manning a privateer ship.

The fourth and last part deals with the myths and the reality of the privateer’s activity in the period under analysis. It is short and to the point. First it deals with the literary myths of the courageous adventurer, the childish myths of the pirate’s treasure-chests buried in the end of every rainbow, and with the more adult myths of the pirates’ supposed aspirations of freedom, solidarity, and social justice. Then it gives the reader a hint of the lives of these men: boredom, starvation, fear, disease, alcoholism, sex, shipwrecks, and capture. Nothing too exciting. In the conclusion the author attempts to sum up the actions of privateers during the two centuries covered in the book and give the reader a final balance, before a section with maps and seven annexes with information regarding the possible existence of sunken treasures, the different approaches of treasure-hunters and archaeologists towards them, and some chronological lists with shipwrecks, attacks, governors and privateers.

Like many other historians, archaeologists, journalists, and film-makers, Moreau reiterates the widespread myth that the Spanish paid a heavy price for their empire and that piracy plagued their finances and poisoned their lives. Many generations of readers have now been given a version of European history in which the Spanish Empire is but a sequence of defeats, invasions, robberies, and humiliations at the hands of their strong, courageous and righteous enemies. If we are to believe this version of history, Spaniards were just a bunch of cowardly, corrupt, and inept people, naturally inclined to oppress all natives in the world—unlike the rest of the Europeans—and always ready to hide under their beds when the word ‘Drake’ was uttered. I beg to disagree. For example, I think that the 1588 Armada episode is just a short footnote in the history of the Spanish Empire. The Hapsburgs were on the attack and did not change their policy toward England after 1588.

Skowronek and Ewen, however, mention an ‘architecture of fear’ to describe the Spanish fortification system in the Caribbean. Their book is an attempt to establish the possible specificities of archaeological sites related to pirate and privateer activity. Although the attempt is a failure, the book is very interesting and worth reading. Following a preface that outlines the importance of pirates in the imagination of the ‘boomer’ generation and a short introduction that clearly establishes the scope and importance of this book, the editors introduce a first part with papers

pertaining to the archaeology of land sites related to pirate and privateer activities. This part covers excavations and surveys at Port Royal, Jamaica, Lafitte's Grand Terre Island at New Orleans, Louisiana, a British settlement on the Bay Islands, Honduras, and another at the mouth of the Belize River. All these are informative papers.

There follows a second section, which I found generally less interesting, about the excavation or exploration of 'pirate ships and their prey'. This starts with Patrick Lizé's account of the excavation, with Jacques Dumas, of the shipwreck of the pirate-ship *Speaker* off Mauritius, which reiterates his 1984 publication in *IJNA*. Then there are two papers on explorer Barry Clifford's projects, the supposed *Fiery Dragon* and the *Whydah*, both lacking site-plans and therefore difficult to follow. As the editors mention in their introduction, the chapter about the *Whydah* is the first scholarly publication on this shipwreck, otherwise known to the general public through Barry Clifford's many books and one dissenting version of the story by Stephen Kiesling titled *Walking the Plank*. The next two chapters deal with the North Carolina shipwreck 31CR314, which is believed to be the remains of Blackbeard's ship *Queen Anne's Revenge*, lost in the area in 1718. Both chapters are interesting and informative, and together provide a good overview of the story of this shipwreck. Following these two chapters is a report describing a late-18th or early-19th century flatboat found on the Ohio River, completed with the account of a yet unfinished and fascinating investigation into the river-pirate folklore. This second part of the book closes with a chapter penned by the editors and presenting a good summary of the history of the Spanish Caribbean, its enemies, and the Spanish defence system.

Like Moreau's book, this one ends with a section about myths and facts. It includes a sober chapter by Lawrence Babits, Joshua Howard and Matthew Brenkle which outlines the difficulty of proving that a certain shipwreck site is related with piracy. Unless there are known diagnostic artefacts directly related to a particular ship, it is nearly impossible to define the specific traits of a pirate ship, crew, and artefacts.

As the authors wisely state, although there are certain modifications that could be expected (and even then not exclusively) in a pirate ship, such as cutting down the forecastle or adding sweep ports, 'most nautical archaeology has very little to do with a vessel above the bilge'. I agree with the idea stated that artefacts may provide clues, although generally 'any suggested pirate ship or pirate artefact model includes precisely those items that an armed merchantman would have'. The last chapter is a thought-provoking overview of the notion of piracy and the perception of lawlessness from the 16th century to the present day.

Although providing fragmentary and inconclusive evidence about the complex and vast world of privateering and piracy, and failing to introduce either

a specific archaeology of pirates' lairs and ships, or a history of piracy, both these books are definitely worth reading and deserve a place in the assigned readings of every nautical archaeology student.

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Slave Ships and their Captive Cargoes, 1730–1807

EMMA CHRISTOPHER

241 pp., 8 b&w illustrations

Cambridge University Press, The Edinburgh Building, Shaftesbury Road, Cambridge CB2 3RU, UK, 2006, £35/\$65 (hbk), ISBN 0-52186-162-4, £12.99/\$21.99 (sbk), ISBN 0-521-67966-4

In 1807, Parliament passed an Act that made illegal the involvement of British ships and subjects in the transatlantic slave trade. It was the culmination of many years of campaigning by a range of people from all sections of British society. Today, this legislation is principally, and justifiably, remembered for outlawing the forced transportation of millions of enslaved Africans across the Atlantic Ocean. For contemporaries involved in the campaign, however, the end of British slave-trading also heralded an end to the severe depredations suffered by European sailors serving on these same ships. Indeed, one of the foremost activists in the Abolition campaign, Thomas Clarkson, presented compelling evidence to the House of Commons arguing this very point. Far from being the 'nursery of the navy', the slave trade was as lethal, if not more so, to European sailors as to enslaved Africans.

Of course, this should in no way diminish the centrality of the suffering of Africans, nor excuse the misery inflicted by slave-ship crews. However, it serves to highlight one of Emma Christopher's central arguments in this excellent book, in which she suggests that suffering was not merely a clear-cut, black-and-white issue, but rather more nuanced and complicated than this. Indeed, the levels and degrees of distress endured by all involved speaks volumes about the inherent barbarism of transatlantic slavery. That it was a brutalising experience, dehumanising both enslaved and enslaver alike, was a common theme of Abolitionists in Britain, and Christopher's work empirically and eloquently proves these assertions.

There is no question that slave-ship crews played a crucial role in quelling the frequent slave rebellions that occurred on board ships. It has been estimated that perhaps one in ten slaving voyages suffered some form of major organised slave revolt, and that one in three crew members was employed for the sole purpose

Russel K. Skowronek and Charles R. Ewen eds. *X Marks the Spot. The Archaeology of Piracy*. Gainesville: University Press of Florida, 2006, xxvi + 339 pp. This highly original book appeared in the University Press of Florida's series *New Perspectives on Maritime History and Nautical Archaeology*. In providing valuable information for a broader understanding of piracy, perceptions on piracy and the archaeology of piracy, this part of the book certainly lifts the study of actual pirate sites, described in the foregoing chapters, to a higher level. Charles R. Ewen explains in his introduction why there is very little in the archaeological literature about piracy whereas historical works on pirates abound.