

the endemic diseases common among some African tribes. Ironically, the African natives who were exploited as slaves generally fared better with these novel diseases, which was not the case for the indigenous civilizations in America.

Finally, the influence of the discoveries changed classical writings that circulated across Europe. New information derived from genuine experiences challenged and gradually replaced the folklore and some religious traditional beliefs that led to the Portuguese Renaissance, Newitt's recurrent underlying theme.

Navigations: The Portuguese Discoveries of the Renaissance is a highly rewarding but at times a challenging read with the appearance of many unfamiliar Portuguese terms. Fortunately, the book's glossary is helpful. A rigorously scholarly work, it recounts the most important portion of Portuguese maritime history while exposing many myths that have been propagated by them in a historical context and modern perspective. This reviewer recommends Newitt's book to all historians interested in this dynamic period of discovery.

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Matthew Richardson. *Manxmen at Sea in the Age of Nelson, 1760-1815*. Barnsley, S. Yorks: Pen & Sword Maritime, www.pen-and-sword.co.uk, 2024. viii+168 pp., illustrations, notes, bibliography, index. UK £22.00, US \$42.95, cloth; ISBN 978-1-39904-449-3. (E-book available.)

Thanks to its geographical position off the coast of England, the Isle of Man was well suited to be a haven for skilled seafaring men operating in both legal and extralegal capacities. Matthew Richardson seeks to analyze this plethora of seafaring talent in the context of the Age of Nelson and the scientific and military expansion of the British Empire. By the 1750s, the vast majority of the Manx, as they are properly called, drew their livings from the sea and its trades in some fashion. For some, this took the form of fishing for herring in the Irish Sea, where weather and tide constantly tested a sailor's worth, while others engaged in the merchant trade, both legal and illegal. On the proper side of the law, Manxmen were well regarded within the triangle trade and, as such, were frequently sought out by Liverpool traders for their Guineamen as crew and shipmasters.

Conversely, the precarious waterways of Liverpool and Morecambe Bays and Solway Firth provided ample opportunity for Manxmen to use their sailing skills as smugglers to avoid the taxes of the British crown. In turn, British Navy officials were frequently posted to the island with hopes that they could,

at a minimum, curtail smuggling operations, thereby forcing some additional revenue into the royal coffers. Of course, the naval presence on the Isle of Man was not solely a response to the threat of smugglers, no matter how serious the King's Revenues might have felt such a threat was. Rather, the Navy recognized the importance of the placement of the Isle when it came to protecting the growing empire and projecting its authority. Here, they would oversee not only Royal Navy-centered operations relating to intelligence and supply, but they could as needed impress masses of skilled sailors for their warships when the specter of war did loom. Indeed, Richardson highlights that the Manxmen were so valued for their skills at sea that, during the Seven Years' War, their coastal waters were almost constantly filled with Royal Navy and privateer ships seeking more sailors to press into service.

Necessarily central to the story of the Isle of Man in the expansion of British might is the presence of famous or infamous figures. For example, William Bligh and the story of the *Bounty* Mutiny both connect back to the island. While not a Manxman, Bligh had married Elizabeth Betham, whose father was a customs collector at Douglas on the Isle of Man. Their marriage saw William move to the island and engage with many of the area's prominent families. In turn, when the *Bounty* sailed, it sailed with a crew filled with Manxmen, and the ensuing mutiny would feature numerous men whose families the Blighs had engaged with socially. The mutiny itself, in turn, would be decried by some as a "Manx plot," although this would never be proven in any fashion. By threading in such well-known figures with ties to the Isle, Richardson adds a layer of credibility to his view of the centrality of the island in British maritime interests of the period. Not only were Manxmen serving onboard ships as nameless tars, but they were in various fashions the main, or at least supporting, characters of many a soon-to-be well-trod tale. Additionally, with an eye toward drawing in less scholarly eyes, adding these stories makes the book as a whole more intriguing and accessible.

The Isle of Man historically shares many traits with two islands that may be more familiar to North American maritime scholars: Nantucket and Newfoundland. Those traits include an insular local population that is difficult for outsiders to communicate with but skilled in the arts of sailing and fishing, and an unforgiving local geography that ensures a level of independence that may not have been allowed elsewhere. Most of all, these islands all saw their populations become significant parts of the expansion of the empires to which they belonged, while also often being undervalued due to their insularity, independence, and distance from the halls of government.

While by no means a long book, Richardson has written a book that highlights several of the contributions of the Manx and opens up new lines of possible inquiry. Further, its chapters are well suited for use as shorter

secondary readings for many upper-undergraduate maritime history classes. While not intended to be all-encompassing, this book certainly is not lacking.

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Nicholas Rogers. *Maritime Bristol in the Slave-Trade Era*. Martlesham, Suffolk, England: Boydell & Brewer, 2024. 262 pp. US \$115.00, hardback; ISBN 978-183765151-1.

Discussion of the role and place of Great Britain and of specific maritime-focused cities in the Atlantic slave trade has been a growing topic of interest in recent years. Protests and demonstrations have occurred across Britain as citizens wrestle with the ongoing legacies of the business of enslavement, both publicly and privately. Key to these discussions has frequently been not only a recognition of the histories that exist but a recommitment on the part of historians to delve into the topic and bring it into the light and part of broader discussions of the development of many communities. Much as Anthony Tibbles did in 2018 with his book *Liverpool and the Slave Trade*, Nicholas Rogers picked one of the prominent maritime trade towns of Great Britain (in this case Bristol) and dug deep into how the enslaving trade was woven into the fabric of not only business but also day-to-day life for many of its residents. Over the course of nine collected essays he outlines the shape of Bristolian society from multiple vantage points while also pointing to potential future lines of research.

Rogers's first area of focus is not the slave trade itself, but rather the question of freedom and liberty as it was perceived by the sailors of Bristol. A lieutenant under the command of Captain William Hamilton impressed several local river pilots by aiding others to escape the press gang. In retaliation, the remaining river pilots refused to guide ships through the tricky waters, and Hamilton was forced to gain permission to un-impress those pilots. This process reaffirmed to the sailors of Bristol the importance of maintaining one's liberties. Adding to this, in the next chapter Rogers shows that Bristol sailors were well aware of the variety of dangers they faced in the trade, particularly in the form of ship-board revolts, fears of which added to their desires to strongly limit the liberties of others onboard ship. Rogers contends this brutality was further shaped by the sociology of the crew members themselves, both in how they were often drawn from specific communities within Bristol and how they were "seasoned" for the trade by those who had come before them. Through the perpetuation of certain rituals and rules, as well as the careful selection of specific men, slave-trade ships