

raise the Soviet sub K-129 (161).

Reiseberg was clever and duplicitous, but Pinkerton shows us how most of his perceived greatness was absorbed from others. The author challenges Rieseberg's stories by placing texts convincingly side-by-side and under "this looks familiar" to point out falsehoods. Pinkerton spells out how, "even with repeated evidence that his tales were false accounts of underwater adventures, he never once relented in his affirmation that he did all the things he claimed" (223). Many of those duped into believing Rieseberg's bullshit seem to have been entertained by it, recognized it as falsehoods, and even forgave him. Whether Rieseberg was a Mason protected by a code of secrecy, a Klan leader protected by a mask, or was in a diving bell with an octopus being attacked by a shark, he always survived, an emission's risk before aerosol.

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Pomey, Patrice and Eric Reith; translated by Colin Clement. *Nautical Archaeology*

Texas A&M University Press, 2024

xi + 248 pp., photographs, diagrams, maps, bibliography, glossary, index

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This work is a translation of *L'archaéologie navale*, originally published in 2005, "completely revised, expanded and updated both in terms of text and illustrations" (ix). It is intended to be a manual for discussion of highest-level concepts governing the archaeology of wrecks and "to educate by describing, explaining and analyzing, with as much rigor and clarity as possible nautical archaeology as a scientific discipline with its own definitions, concepts, theoretical principles, methods, and issues" (5). Its coverage is of pre-industrial wooden boats and ships, which includes Viking, Mediterranean, and Keralan designs. Vessels for riverine, coastal, and open-ocean uses are included. The cover illustration is the only colour photograph, presenting the inside of an open wooden vessel's hull, which is notable for being sewn together. This sets the tone: we are about to explore the detail and myriad complexity of ancient and historical boatbuilding technologies. The introduction humbly details the classic texts of nautical archaeology as primary sources for the work.

There are four major chapters. "Definitions and Issues" introduces the technical complexities of a range of craft from an ancient dugout canoe (logboat) to a 74-gun ship of the line from the eighteenth century. The ship

is conceptualized on three levels: “as a machine designed to function as a means of transport; a functioning ensemble arising from an economic or military system; and as a closed community, ‘with its own hierarchy, customs, and conventions’” (11). This tripartite framework is amplified and refined throughout the following chapters. “The Sources” introduces types of evidence: the wreck itself with physical data and direct evidence, plus documentary, graphic, and ethnographic evidence. “Methods” “presents remarks on sought-after outcomes” (85) of the development of an excavation strategy and from the use of techniques and technology (e.g., mapping, photogrammetry, carbon dating, and dendrochronology), rather than providing a “how to” manual for excavation. The perception is introduced that “the objective of every excavation and every study in nautical archaeology... is to reach a point where reconstruction of the original ship in its triple aspects of machine, functioning ensemble, and living space can be achieved” (135). “Results and Perspectives” follows the historical development of the main streams of shipbuilding from ancient times up to the modern period.

The conclusion is a discussion of the place of nautical archaeology within the academic field of archaeology. The authors detail the limitations of the book. For example, they know less about the boats’ rigging and fastenings than about its architecture. They also propose a debate on the inclusive term “maritime archaeology” as a replacement for “nautical archaeology.” Their reiteration of geographic limitations would seem to be an invitation for scholars to extend the lessons here to study the Americas. There are a few references to Canada. One example is the authors’ treatment of the archaeological service of Parks Canada in handling the excavation and subsequent re-burial of the Basque whaler *San Juan* that sank in 1565 off Newfoundland, which is described as “pioneering and exemplary” (130).

The physical book is inviting in all aspects from paper to typeface. The book is divided equally between text and illustrations, which include drawings, plans, and photographs. Layout leaves much white space, which somehow improves readability. It brings together the illustrations of the entire library of the classic texts on which this work is based. Detailed descriptions of the most important of these works are placed in the introduction as a frame of reference. Illustrations include very high-quality photographs of plans and drawings from classic texts. Captions for illustrations and legends on maps and plans are frequently in the language of the boatbuilders, primarily French, Latin, and Norsk. The bibliography is laid out by main chapter, and the index is also useful. The authors’ use of the metric system as the standard unit of measurement for the book simplifies the comparison of artifacts for an

international community of readers.

The work is an adventure in the variety of languages used by seafarers and boatbuilders. The text is at the high level needed to express complex technologies and abstruse ideas. For example, before the use of plans, it was necessary for the expert boatbuilder to develop a perfect mental picture of the construction prior to beginning. The glossary is taken from another publication of the Texas A&M University Press's nautical archaeology series, *Wooden Ship Building and the Interpretation of Ship Wrecks* by Richard Steffy (2017). Inclusion of archaic Norsk, French, and Latin nautical terms would have been useful since most captions are not in English.

This work is a tour de force in every respect, an obvious labour of love on the part of a lot of talented and resourceful people. In the case of the authors, it is the result of a 50-year collaboration and was executed by a team of people, including the translation and publication in a wonderful format by the Ed Rachal Foundation and Texas A&M University Press, which added resources and passion to the final product. Acknowledgements outline the credentials of members of the publication team. Guilia Boetto, who is credited with "constant collaboration in completing the file of illustrations relating to ancient Mediterranean nautical archaeology," is Director of Research at Centre national de la recherche scientifique (CNRS) at the Centre Camille Julien Aix Marseille University. It also thanks the contributors to the project, including the government of France, which helps account for this opulent yet affordable production. Anyone interested in history should read this work. Scholars in history, economics, archaeology, naval architecture will want this outstanding book in their library.

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Queeney, Tim. *Rope: How a Bundle of Twisted Fibers Became the Backbone of Civilization*

St. Martin's Press (Macmillan Publishers), 2025

332 pp., notes, bibliography, index

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In the maritime context sailors have given rope, or lines as they are nautically known, special names reflecting their various functions. Sails are raised and lowered by halyards, sheets operate the sails, and sometimes wild spinnakers