

Europe who lacks expertise on both the ancient and the early modern Middle East and has therefore relied on colleagues for secondary literature recommendations. I am not in a position to judge his sources on Middle Eastern antiquities, but those consulted on the Arab lands in the eighteenth century represent a curious mix of respectable, mediocre, overly general, obsolete, and inaccurate. A few glaring factual errors result, such as the assertion that the Ottomans never conquered Yemen, and Baack occasionally reproduces Niebuhr's mis-transcriptions, e.g., Dola for Dawla and Dsjise for Giza; Baack's use of diacritical marks is similarly erratic. The most compelling parts of the book are those that draw on the letters and reports of Niebuhr and other team members, shedding light on the details of their work, their relationships, and their attitudes toward the lands and peoples they encountered. When covering the expedition's actual progress, Baack seems to be essentially paraphrasing Niebuhr's published account.

The expedition's fortunes underline the precariousness of such an undertaking in the era before modern medicine and communications. The five other team members all succumbed to malaria between May 1763 and February 1764, leaving Niebuhr to embark on a three-year solitary return to Denmark via India, Iran, and Eastern Europe. Once back in Denmark, he struggled to publish his own and Forsskål's findings, as detailed in chapter 4, which also evaluates the expedition's contributions to scholarship in a variety of disciplines and its influence on later scholarship. An edifying epilogue describes Niebuhr's post-expedition life in rural Denmark.

In a lengthy conclusion, Baack attempts to place the expedition within a variety of interpretive frameworks from recent scholarship, most notably Mary Louise Pratt's paradigm of the "anti-conquest conquest" (*Imperial Eyes: Travel Writing and Transculturation* [1991]), whereby seemingly value-neutral scientific investigations of a non-European region led to "displacement of indigenous frameworks of knowledge by European-imposed ones" (370), and Jürgen Osterhammel's argument that in the course of the eighteenth century, Europeans altered the nature of their engagement with Asia by "demystifying" it, i.e., configuring it in rational, scientific terms, a clear sign of the Enlightenment-era displacement of wonder by curiosity (*Die Entzauberung Asiens: Europa und die asiatischen Reiche im 18. Jahrhundert* [1998; rev. ed. 2010]). In this connection, Baack compares the Danish expedition to other state-sponsored exploratory missions of the period, notably James Cook's exploration of the Pacific, noting the minute size of the Danish team and their almost total reliance on the indigenous infrastructure, as opposed to reliance on ships and armies supplied by the mother country. Baack makes an intriguing point about the role of Niebuhr's rural background in shaping his approach to the Middle East, giving him a natural empathy for the native populace, most of whom were agriculturalists and pastoralists, and limiting his identification with the imperial metropole.

The author obviously has a great deal of personal sympathy for Niebuhr, and some of his assertions may stop just short of cheerleading. However, this is an engrossing study, lucidly written and exhaustively researched, that sheds welcome light on a pivotal mission.

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MICHAEL ZEUSKE. *Amistad: A Hidden Network of Slavers and Merchants*. Translated by STEVEN RENDALL. Princeton, N.J.: Markus Wiener, 2015. Pp. xiv, 268. Cloth \$88.95, paper \$26.95.

Up to an estimated ten million Africans forcibly were removed from the continent and taken on ships bound for the New World during the course of the Atlantic slave trade. Once in the Americas, they endured a slavery that was unlike any they had ever experienced in their homeland. In an English translation of his work first published in German, Michael Zeuske examines the complex network of slavers, merchants, Africans, and empires during the nineteenth century by using the *Amistad* as the starting point. He argues that slavery became "a form of capitalism in which the main capital is human bodies . . . and Africa suddenly became the beginning and the center of a history of human bodies as capital" even as countries increasingly outlawed the African slave trade and slavery itself (12). Zeuske develops a truly Atlantic history that focuses not on ending slavery and its trade, but rather "increas[ing] slavery and slave dealing as well as human trafficking" during the very period that it was being banned (10). In this way, Zeuske successfully redirects the reader to look past the thesis that describes the end of the slave trade and abolition as the norm in order to reveal what he calls the "Hidden Atlantic."

Zeuske's work spans the Atlantic world in nine chapters. He establishes a firm foundation and background for the work with chapters 1 and 2, which weave in and out of the historical narrative of the *Amistad* to include the 2005 discovery of the case's original Cuban documents, and place the study within the larger context of Atlantic and world history. Returning to the prisoners on board the *Amistad* in chapter 3, he examines their individual histories and backgrounds in order to provide a more complete picture of these African captives as people rather than as secondary actors in a larger discussion of slavery and international law, as is sometimes the practice with works that examine the case from a U.S.-centric perspective of the *Amistad*. Chapters 6 to 8, however, make the most valuable contributions. Zeuske successfully argues that for many in Cuba, for example, smuggling of slaves was a "way to quickly achieve a certain prosperity and even wealth" (113). Chapter 7, entitled "Africa," is the longest and focuses on the interactions between slave agents, dealers, and captains in Africa. Zeuske examines various areas of Africa separately. In one section, he demonstrates, for example, how one of the most powerful slave traffickers along the Rio Pongo used slaves as labor on nearby coffee

plantations as a way to disguise his illegal slave dealings, and notes that in 1843, a Bambara king ordered that “almost all the 800 prisoners taken were decapitated . . . because he could not sell them to the Atlantic slave traders” (159).

As such trade was illegal during the period that Zeuske examines, documents that would provide insights are difficult to find, since any record of illicit transactions could be used against those committing such acts. He relies on sources in numerous national and local Cuban, Portuguese, and Spanish archives, such as notarial records related to shipping including customs duty lists, and actions taken against those engaging in this illegal trade. The diversity and geographic range of these archival materials allow Zeuske to create a study that truly stretches across both sides of the Atlantic, from Africa to the Caribbean, and across the Americas.

The work’s strengths lie in the vivid details of the slave trade within Africa, and the various methods used by slavers to elude capture. He acknowledges that the work is not a study that examines the slave trade and slavery “from below” but rather from several perspectives including that of mid-level participants such as slave ship captains and others, as well as those at the “top” including slave dealers and colonial officials (ix). Yet, it is in this very middle-sector that Zeuske’s work makes its most powerful contributions, building on studies that examine the lives of slaves, such as Marcus Rediker’s *The Slave Ship: A Human History* (2007). This work is well-written and thoroughly researched. The complex connections between the various actors could be clarified through the use of additional diagrams, along with the various maps and drawings, to visualize these relationships. *Amistad: A Hidden Network of Slavers and Merchants* adds a unique and often overlooked viewpoint from which to examine the Atlantic slave trade. Upper-division undergraduate and graduate students in world, Atlantic world, and studies of the Americas (both North and Latin) would benefit from this work, which develops the interconnected nature of the slave trade in ways that are clear and powerful.

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DAVIDE RODOGNO, BERNHARD STRUCK, and JAKOB VOGEL, editors. *Shaping the Transnational Sphere: Experts, Networks and Issues from the 1840s to the 1930s*. (Studies in Contemporary European History, no. 14.) New York: Berghahn Books, 2015. Pp. xiii, 305. \$120.00.

Historians have been increasingly employing the adjective “transnational” in their writings and it may be safely said that this term has entered the scholarly vocabulary and is likely to stay there for a long time. But what they mean by “transnational” is not always clear, as is demonstrated by a sentence like the following, found in *Shaping the Transnational Sphere: Experts, Networks and Issues from the 1840s to the 1930s*: “international

comparisons and transnational discussions on educational issues provided additional knowledge and symbolic capital to reformers, who ultimately contributed to shape [sic] national reform agendas” (232). Why “international comparisons and transnational discussions” rather than just “international comparisons and discussions,” or “transnational comparisons and discussions”? In other words, what is the distinction between “international” and “transnational”? If these words mean more or less the same thing, why do we not stick to just one?

The editors add to this overall conceptual confusion by incorporating phrases like: “the emergence of a transnational or, in some cases, supranational consciousness among European élites” (2), and “international congresses perfectly embody the transnational space” (2). Some nineteenth-century religious organizations are said to have become less “transnational” and more “inter-national” (the author’s hyphen, 40). The International Congress on Accidents at Work is called “a transnational policy community” (61). To take another example, the prison reform movement in the nineteenth century is characterized as “a transnational network and as an international organization” (198–199). One cannot escape the conclusion that several of the writers in this book do not clearly distinguish between the two words, “international” and “transnational.” An added source of confusion is the use of the term “global” here and there in this book. For instance, Pope Leo XIII’s 1899 call to “consecrate the whole world to the Sacred Heart” is seen as “a striking instance of ‘global consciousness’ on the eve of the new century” (25).

What is the difference between “transnational” and “global”? For instance, Tobias Brinkmann’s essay on “transnational Jewish philanthropic organizations” in the nineteenth century may just as well have been entitled “global Jewish philanthropic organizations.” Both “transnational” and “global” are useful terms, and they are frequently used interchangeably. In this instance, Jewish philanthropic organizations were certainly not “international” because there were no Jewish nations at that time. Most Jews were citizens of nations, but at the same time they were transnational, global beings.

There is no sustained discussion anywhere in the book of a possible distinction between “transnational history” and “global history,” reflective of the overall situation in the academic world and in scholarship today, in which these two terms are often used interchangeably. Many essays in this collected volume provide examples of cross-border (whether termed “international” or “transnational”) networks of experts in such fields as child wellbeing, public sanitation, and prison reform. The key probably is the word “networks.” These experts were in communication with one another, and together they produced an international community whose ideas and practices were useful across national boundaries. In describing such efforts to bring nations together, the term “internationalism” is commonly used. But internationalism is built upon the existence of sovereign states and would never displace nations. Transnationalism, on the other hand, can transcend and even obliterate