

THE PACIFIC CIRCLE



October 2008

BULLETIN NO. 21

ISSN 1520-3581

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PACIFIC CIRCLE NEWS

MEMBERS' NEWS and ANNOUNCEMENTS

Congratulations to Rainer F. Buschmann (California State University–Channel Islands) on the upcoming publication by the University of Hawai‘i Press of *Anthropology's Global Histories: The Ethnographic Frontier in German New Guinea, 1870-1935*. Rainer's book recovers some of anthropology's global character by viewing its history in Oceania through the concept of the “ethnographic frontier,” or the furthestmost limits of the anthropologically-known regions of the Pacific – in this case, the colony of German New Guinea (1884-1914). Buschmann explores the interactions between the German colonial officers, resident ethnographic collectors, and indigenous peoples.

Congratulations also to Michael A. Osborne (University of California–Santa Barbara) on the publication of “Edouard-Marie Heckel,” *New Dictionary of Scientific Biography* (Detroit, MI: Charles Scribner's Sons 2008). Michael writes that “Heckel was a French pharmacist and botanist who worked in the South Pacific.”

The Australian National Radio podcast for James Fleming's “The Climate Engineers” is available at <http://www.abc.net.au/rn/backgroundbriefing/>.

Interested in Charles Darwin? Michele Aldrich (maldrich@smith.edu) and Alan Leviton (alevito@calacademy.org) are soliciting oral and poster presentations for a session on Darwin sponsored by the History and Philosophy Section of the Pacific Division AAAS. The session will follow a symposium arranged by Dr. Michael Ghiselin on the Galapagos Islands to mark the 150th anniversary of the publication of *Origin of Species* and the 200th anniversary of Darwin's birth. Please send Michele and/or Alan a tentative title or description as soon as possible. Graduate student papers are eligible.



HSS NEWS

The upcoming History of Science Society annual meeting will be held jointly with the Pacific Science Association and is scheduled for November 6-9, 2008, in Pittsburgh, PA. For more information, please visit <http://www.hssonline.org/meeting/2008HSSCFPPitt.html>.

2008 annual conference panels of possible interest to Pacific Circle members include: “Scientific Nationalism and Modern East Asia” (F2); “Colonial Natural History in the Modern Era” (F21); “Human Sciences and Empire” (S3); “Science, Politics, and Culture: New Perspectives on Science and Medicine in Modern East Asia and Beyond” (S6) and “In Darwin’s Day” (S19).

Future HSS meetings are on the calendar for November 18-22, 2009, in Phoenix, Arizona, and November 4-7, 2010, in Montreal, Canada, a joint meeting with the Philosophy of Science Association.

FUTURE MEETINGS, CONFERENCES, SEMINARS, and CALLS FOR PAPERS

27-30 October 2008. “Harmonizing River Catchment and Estuary,” the 8th International Conference on the Environmental Management of Enclosed Coastal Seas (EMECS 8), to be held in Shanghai, China. The meeting aims to develop interdisciplinary interaction among the fields of policy, science, technology, and citizen activity on the environmental conservation and restoration of coastal seas. For more details, please visit <http://www.emecs-8.ecnu.edu.cn>.

14-17 November 2008. The 20th Conference of the International Association of Historians of Asia (IAHA), to be held at Jawaharlal Nehru University, New Delhi, India. For additional information, visit <http://www.jnu.ac.in/conference/IAHA> or contact iaha2008jnu@yahoo.co.in.

8-12 December 2008. Pacific History Association Biennial Conference, to be held at the University of the South Pacific and the Pacific Theological College, in Suva, Fiji. For additional information, visit http://www.pacifichistoryassociation.com/17th_biennial_conference.htm.

2-6 March 2009. 11th Pacific Science Inter-Congress in conjunction with 2nd Symposium on French Research in the Pacific, to be held in Tahiti, French Polynesia. The theme is “Pacific Countries and Their Ocean: Facing Local and Global Changes.” Sub-themes include ecosystems, biodiversity, and sustainable development; climate change and ocean acidification; health challenges in the Pacific; cultural and political stakes of modernity and economic challenges for the future. Please visit the conference web site at: <http://www.psi2009.pf>.

12-14 March 2009. “Darwin’s Reach: A Celebration of Darwin’s Legacy Across Academic Disciplines,” to be held at Hofstra University. The meeting examines the impact of Darwin and Darwinian Evolution on science and society. For additional information about the meeting and submissions, please visit: http://www.hofstra.edu/Community/culctr/culctr_events_darwin.html.

1-4 April 2009. “Climate Change Science, Environmental Challenges, and Cultural Anxiety: Historical Perspectives,” an international and interdisciplinary conference to be held at Colby College, Waterville, Maine, USA. The meeting will focus on pre-circulated papers being prepared for *Osiris* 26. Graduate students are encouraged to present their climate-related work in a special session devoted to dissertations. Potential participants should submit an abstract and short biographical sketch before December 15, 2008. The deadline for submitting pre-circulated papers is February 12, 2009. Please address all email correspondence with the subject heading “Colby Climate Conference.” Send to Prof. James Fleming at jfleming@colby.edu.

14-17 May 2009. “Ports, Forts and Sports: Maritime Economy, Defense and Recreation through Time and Across Space,” the 28th Annual Conference of the North American Society for Oceanic History (NASOH), co-sponsored by the National Maritime Historical Society and the Steamship Historical Society of America. The Program Committee invites proposals for papers and sessions exploring all fields of study related to saltwater or navigable freshwater environments, including, but not limited to, archaeology and anthropology, arts and sciences, history, and museums. Proposals that identify the unique characteristics and influence of maritime economy, defense and recreation in the Pacific and other ocean regions are especially encouraged. Proposals for individual papers and panels with three papers and a chair are due no later than December 1, 2008. Send an abstract of 500 words for each paper, plus a one-page abstract for the proposed panel, and a bio of 200 words for each participant. Send to Victor T. Mastone, Board of Underwater Archaeological Resources, Commonwealth of Massachusetts, 251 Causeway Street, Suite 800, Boston, MA 02114, USA Email: victor.mastone@state.ma.us and James M. Allan, Saint Mary’s College of California, Department of Anthropology,

P.O. Box 4613, 1928 Saint Mary's Road, Moraga, CA 94556, USA Email: jallan@stmarys-ca.edu.

12-17 July 2009. Meeting of the International Society for the History, Philosophy, and Social Studies of Biology, to be held at Emmanuel College, St. Lucia, Brisbane, Australia. For details, please visit <http://www.ishpsb2009.org/>.

28 July-2 August 2009. XXIIIrd International Congress of History of Science and Technology, to be held in Budapest, Hungary. The general subject is "Ideas and Instruments in Social Context." For further information, please visit <http://www.conferences.hu/ichs09>.

27-31 July 2009. Fifth International and Interdisciplinary Conference, Alexander von Humboldt, 2009: Travels Between Europe and the Americas, to be held at the Freie Universitat, Berlin, Germany. Scholars from all disciplines are invited to submit abstracts for papers concerning von Humboldt, travel and science, global environments, European-Latin American scientific and travel connections, and contemporary travel writing. Abstracts of up to 250 words can be submitted on line in English, German, or Spanish at <http://www.humboldtconference2009.de>. Address further inquiries to Prof. Oliver Lubrich at lubrich@zedat.fu-berlin.de.

23-26 September 2009. 10th International Symposium on Maritime Health, to be held in Goa, India. The theme for the symposium is: "Quality Maritime Health & Seafarers Welfare – A Global Perspective." For additional information, please contact Dr. Suresh Idnani, Chair ISMH 10 at chairman@ismh10.com.

20-22 November 2009. "150 Years of Evolution: Darwin's Impact on the Humanities and Social Sciences," a symposium in honor of the 200th birthday of Charles Darwin and the 150th anniversary of the publication of *Origins of Species*, to be held at San Diego State University. Scholars from all disciplines are invited to submit papers addressing the impact of Darwin's ideas in the Humanities and Social Sciences, including disciplinary specific or inter-disciplinary papers. Please submit abstracts of no more than 500 words to Mark Wheeler at mark.wheeler@sdsu.edu no later than November 30, 2008. For additional information, contact Symposium Chair, Department of Philosophy, SDSU, 5500 Campanile Drive, San Diego, CA 92182-6014, USA or (619) 594-6706.



EMPLOYMENT, GRANTS, EDUCATION, and PRIZES

The Scientific Instrument Society awards small grants for research on the history of scientific instruments. The grants are open to both members and non-members, and there is no geographical restriction. Monies should enable new research, rather than funding activities to which the applicant is already committed. They may be used to cover any research expenses, including travel and photography. However, the grants cannot be used to purchase equipment nor are they intended to support conference travel, unless there is a specific research dimension. For further details, please visit <http://www.sis.org/uk>.

The Radcliffe Institute for Advanced Study at Harvard University awards funded residential fellowships designed to support scientists and scholars of exceptional promise and demonstrated accomplishment. For more information, please contact Radcliffe Application Office, 8 Garden Street, Cambridge, MA 02138, USA or email fellowships@radcliffe.edu.

The Department of History and Political Science at Missouri University of Science & Technology invites applications for a tenure-track assistant professorship starting in Fall 2009 in the History of Science with a specialization in any area of European History. For information, please visit http://hr.mst.edu/employment/history_political_sci.html.



BOOK, JOURNAL, and PUBLICATION NEWS

East Asian Science, Technology and Society: An International Journal is now available. EASTS intends to provide an international platform for Science, Technology and Society scholars from around the world with the objective of bringing together in conversation Western and East-Asian STS communities. Articles and reviews consider how society and culture, and the dynamics of science, technology, and medicine are mutually shaped and co-produced. For example, Volume 1 (2007) was a special issue devoted to “Public Participation in Science and Technology.” For additional information about submissions and subscriptions, please contact dwfu@mx.nthu.edu.tw or elchiu@mx.nthu.edu.tw.

Science & Education announces its special anniversary issue to celebrate the 150th anniversary of the publication of *The Origin of Species* and the 200th anniversary of Charles Darwin’s birth. Scholars working on areas related to Darwinism and evolution education are invited to contribute. A science education perspective is welcome, but not necessary. The due date is December 31, 2008. For additional information about the issue and submissions, please visit <http://homepages.wmich.edu/~rudged/darwin.html>.

Members interested in the connections between the history of science and maritime history, might find helpful Richard Drayton, “Maritime Networks and the Making of Knowledge” and Simon Schaffer, “Instruments, Surveys and Maritime Empire,” in David Cannadine, ed. *Empire, the Sea and Global History: Britain’s Maritime World, 1763-1833*, New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2007, 72-82 and 83-104.

The Japanese Association for the History of Geology’s most recent newsletter is a special issue devoted to the “History of Geochemistry in Japan.” JAHIGEO 10 (May 2008) includes Masanori Kaji’s “V. I. Vernadskii and the Introduction of Geochemist into Japan” and Toshifumi Yatsumimi and Toshihiro Yamada’s “Okada Ietake: A Japanese Chemist who Collected Geo-chemical Data in China.” Questions? Please email the editor at PXI02070@nifty.com.

The Canadian Bulletin of Medical History 25:1 (2008) is devoted to the “History of Latin American International Health.” The special issue includes Marcos Cueto’s “International Health, the Early Cold War and Latin America” and various other articles concerning medical history in twentieth-century Latin America.

Technology and Culture 49:3 (July 2008) was devoted to “water issues” and the roles of engineering and science in negotiating public works. Among the articles of possible interest to Circle members included David Biggs, “Breaking from the Colonial Mold: Water Engineering and the Failure of Nation-Building in the Plain of Reeds, Vietnam” (599-623); Esha Shah, “Telling Otherwise: A Historical Anthropology of Tank Irrigation Technology in South India” (652-674); Dianne Van Oosterhout, “From Colonial to Postcolonial Irrigation Technology: Technological Romanticism and the Revival of Colonial Water Tanks in Java, Indonesia” (701-726) and Abbie B. Liel and David P. Billington, “Engineering Innovation at Bonneville Dam” (727-751).



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“Two New Earthworms of the Genus *Pheretima* (Oligochaeta: Megascolecidae) from Mt. Isarog, Luzon Island, Philippines,” by **Yong Hong and Samuel W. James**, *Journal of Natural History* 42:23-24 (2008), 1565-1571.

DISSERTATIONS and THESES

“Greedy for Facts:” Charles Darwin’s Information Needs and Behaviors, **James David Currier, Ph.D.**, University of Pittsburgh, 2007, “applies an Human Information Behavior (HIB)-oriented approach to investigate and inventory Darwin’s information needs and behaviors through analysis of his surviving correspondence and other primary and secondary Darwin-related scholarly sources.”

Unearthing the Nation: Modern Geology and Nationalism in Republican China, 1911-1949, **Grace Yen Shen, Ph.D.**, Harvard University, 2007, “uses the development of modern geology to explore the complex relationship between science and nationalism in Republican China, which spanned the fall of the Qing Dynasty (1911) and the establishment of the People’s Republic of China (1949).”

Water/Power in the Pacific Northwest, **Hilary L. Hawley, Ph.D.**, Washington State University, 2006, “examines the disparity between the widely touted political, economic, and technological value of Reclamation on the Columbia River system and the cultural, environmental, and spiritual devastation these same projects have wreaked.”



BOOK REVIEWS



Hans K. Van Tilburg, *Chinese Junks on the Pacific: Views from a Different Deck*. Gainesville, Florida: University Press of Florida, 2007. Pp. xvi+272. Cloth: US\$ 59.95 and ISBN 978-0-8130-3053-1.

Generally speaking, historical investigations into Pacific crossings in the modern era have remained one-sided affairs. A wide-spread assumption holds that Portuguese and Spanish navigators initiated trans-Pacific routes in the sixteenth century, closely followed by Dutch, French, and British explorers who perfected the task in the latter decades of the eighteenth century. Pacific crossings undertaken

by Asian mariners were rare and remain understudied. While historians point out that many Asians did indeed serve aboard Euro-American vessels, true agency emerged only along Chinese and Japanese coastlines where local authorities dictated the terms of trade and cultural exchange until well into the nineteenth century. Hans Van Tilburg's book seeks to introduce Chinese agency into Pacific history by focusing on the voyage of ten junks that crossed the Pacific between 1905 and 1989. His work is based on a dissertation he defended at the University of Hawai'i. His graduate education both in Hawai'i and in the Maritime History Program at Eastern Carolina University prepared him well for the task at hand. Consequently Van Tilburg does not shy away from venturing beyond the written record to engage these junks in an interdisciplinary fashion. Not only does he examine existing reports and photographic records of the junks' arrival in North America, he also engages, wherever possible, oral histories of the participants as well as archaeological and ethnographic information to complete his account. In doing so, Van Tilburg reveals the multifarious history behind these vessels and the stereotypes held by an intrigued American public witnessing their arrival.

Van Tilburg's work comprises five major chapters. Chapter two introduces the stories of the ten junks that embarked on the crossing and reveals the mavericks and crew members who braved the treacherous Pacific Ocean. Chapters three and four fully expose Van Tilburg's interdisciplinary talents. First he reads the material "artifact" called junk against the larger Chinese maritime past. Then in anthropological fashion he interprets the ships as cultural artifacts. In this process

he reveals many rituals, inscriptions, and beliefs crossing the Pacific on the Chinese vessels. For the comparative historian chapter five is of great value since it is in this chapter Van Tilburg locates Chinese junks in a wider Pacific context. He carefully evaluates the facts suggesting earlier Chinese contact with the Americas and finds most of the evidence circumstantial. Similarly, he highlights forgotten experimental voyages that ventured with reconstructed junks across the Pacific. They all ended up in failure and hardly got the same press exposure as Thor Heyerdahl's *Kon Tiki* venture.

Finally, and perhaps most importantly, Van Tilburg entertains the idea that many of the vessels traveling along the Manila-Acapulco galleon trade, may have been hybrids combining Chinese with western nautical techniques. Although Van Tilburg spends only a few pages on this subject, it uncovers how much there is left to be done in terms of archival research. The marriage between Baltic and Mediterranean naval construction technology certainly invigorated European Atlantic expansion. One wonders whether there are similar cases of hybridization occurring in Manila between 1571 and 1815 the official closure of the Pacific galleon trade. Chapter six delves into the topic of western reception of the arriving junks.

Van Tilburg points out that the term "junk" is problematic since it may have originated from a chance encounter between Portuguese and Southeast Asian mariners. When the former queried the latter about the name of their ships, the answer created a generic term that was soon applied to all Southeast and East Asian vessels. Largely misunderstood the junks were qualified by the American public as "ageless vessels, little changed over thousands of years..." (p. 198). American writers refused to understand these vessels as living artifacts reflecting a changing, yet at the same time historically-rooted maritime culture. For them, junks confirmed the notions that China was caught in an "eternal stagnation," a belief that was further underscored by the insistence that Chinese junks were modeled after sea monsters. This western 'Orientalist' mind-set prevented the perception of the junks as reflecting a changing Chinese nation. Not surprisingly two of these vessels, the Wang Ho and the Ning Po, were exhibited as floating museums of Chinese atrocities and torture devices, reinforcing the stereotypes. Likewise, the recent attention on Ming China's early fifteenth-century maritime expansion led by Admiral Zheng also reinforces the notion of China's stagnation. The fabled treasure ships accompanying this expansion were not representative of Chinese ocean-going vessels around that time. Historians spent much energy explaining why China turned away from its expansion rather than investigating Chinese longstanding littoral and ocean-going cultures that linked their shores to those in Southeast Asia. Although Van Tilburg does not explicitly make

this claim, one wonders whether the neglect of Pacific junks in maritime studies derives largely from such misconceptions.

In sum, Van Tilburg's effort to insert junks into the history of Pacific crossings is an important addition to our understanding of a wider maritime past in this region. Recently, historians and archaeologists have worked in tandem to bring the Austronesian migration into the Pacific from the margins of history. Van Tilburg's engagement with this understudied topic in Pacific history opens up possibilities for further historical exploration. His carefully crafted *Chinese Junks* thus provides a healthy antidote to the more sensationalist works that have appeared on the bookshelves as of late (in particular Gavin Menzies, *1421: The Year China Discovered America*, New York: William Morrow, 2003).

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D. Graham Burnett. *Trying Leviathan: The Nineteenth-Century New York Court Case That Put the Whale on Trial and Challenged the Order of Nature*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press. Pp. 304. Illus, bibliography, index. Cloth US\$ 29.95 and ISBN 978-0-691-12950-1. [Winner of the 2007 Isabelle Hermalyn Book Award, New York Urban History and 2007 New York City Book Award]

On January 1st, 1819, *The New-York Gazette* published the following note:

The great trial between Mr. Maurice inspector of oil, and a gentleman who bought three barrels of *whale* oil without inspection was brought to a close last evening, after occupying the court for three days. The Jury found a verdict for Mr. Maurice, having decided that a *whale* is a *fish* and whale oil fish oil.

This was the closing of a trial originated by the following complaint, entered in the New York Court of Common Pleas, in October 1818:

James Maurice, plaintiff in this suit, complains of Samuel Judd, defendant in this suit, in custody, &c. of a plea, that he render to the said plaintiff the sum of seventy-five dollars, lawful money of the State of New York, which to him he owes and from him unjustly detains.

James Maurice was the appointed “inspector of fish oils” in the city of New York, and Samuel Judd was the proprietor of the New-York Spermaceti Oil & Candle Factory. According to an act dated March 31, 1818, of the New York State Legislature at Albany, the inspector’s duty was clearly defined: “to gauge and inspect any parcel of fish oil.” Only after this inspection, a certificate would be issued both to certify the quality and legalize the use of such oil. Because Samuel Judd did not have such a certificate, this was the reason alleged for the inspector’s law suit.

Oil quality was an important concern at that time. Since oil was an essential good for the population, it was important to prevent the marketing of poor quality and adulterated oils. This required adequate legislation to control oil quality and, as such, regular inspections and quality certifications were an important part of enforcement. Judd’s defense raised a preliminary question: the oil was extracted from a whale and, thus, should not be subject to Maurice’s inspection, under the “fish oil” legislation.

The nature of whales was central in many of the plaintiff’s allegations. This shows just how sensitive the issue involved in this trial was at the time. Indeed, whales were attached to considerations of religious nature and of economic interests and it would not have been fashionable or socially-acceptable to discuss their nature.

The trial had great repercussions, both in New York and neighboring states, and became quite popular. The main periodicals reported on its outcome. Particularly interesting is the identification, by the *Christian Monitor* of Vermont, that the trial was a dispute between the popular side and the philosophical side of the question, echoing the dispute on the science-versus-people position, so common even today.

The trial ultimately led to an emendation of the inspection act, which restricted the scope of oil inspections to the well known and uncontroversial – “liver oil” and “all other oils shall be exempt from inspection.” Samuel Judd was sentenced and charged the \$75.00 he owed Maurice for the fine of three kegs of (fish) oil at \$25.00 plus costs which amounted to a total of \$147.27. Although victorious in the trial, with the legislative change James Maurice was out of a job. Disgusted, he resigned, sold his properties and moved away. He was never heard from again.

D. Graham Burnett (Princeton University) has produced with this very interesting and attractive book an important contribution to the History of Science.

The book is well organized and fully documented. Burnett's many notes suggest significant research. It will be attractive to historians of many different topics, or sub-fields, which the author explores with much creativity. Placing ourselves in the historical moment of the book, its events take place a few years after the War of 1812 and can be seen as part of the early American nation-building efforts. Oil was an essential product for the national economy and fish was its main source. The New England states were the biggest producers. But the quality of the product was questionable and commercial issues were at stake, requiring state protection.

The case also evidences a bias and rivalry among whalers from different regions. At the trial, some whalers testified that, in their understanding, the concept of "fish oil" embraced exclusively cod liver oil. Interestingly, these testimonials were dismissed by the court, based on the argument that those whalers were not true New Yorkers. Rather, they were "Easterners," distinct from the Dutch-blooded New Yorkers, citizens of the former New Amsterdam. This argument, which also points to the economic interests involved in this dispute, is very interestingly presented by Burnett.

Burnett focuses on three main issues: First, the presence of Science in the emerging intellectual scene of the new Republic. In the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, already established scientific institutions in Europe, particularly in the natural sciences, became influential in the designs of the emerging new political order. The independence of practically all the colonies of the Americas made scientific knowledge an important factor in the struggle to establish a national identity for those new nations.

The second point is an incursion into economic and political history. Whales were of major importance for the world economy. Indeed, Americans challenged great whalers, particularly from England. A Parliamentary intervention by Edmund Burke in 1775 complained about the humiliation imposed upon British seafarers by Yankee whalers. Indeed, whaling became a major source of national wealth and a pivotal issue in the economic dispute among the independent States. At the same time, whales had a strong popular appeal, in large part due to their mystical imagery and Biblical reference. Whale skeletons became an attraction in the exhibits of the *New York Institution of Learned and Scientific Establishments*, founded in 1816. What was known about whales? That they lived in the seas and hence "must be a fish." The King James version of The Bible (1611) was very explicit when saying that the "LORD had prepared a great fish to swallow up Jonah. And Jonah was in the belly of the fish three days and three nights." Juvenile and didactic volumes in the early Republic were clear in identifying these great fish as whales and, given their prominent role,

they were crowned the “kings of the seas.” Literature about whales flourished. The high receptivity of Herman Melville’s *Moby Dick*, in 1851, is an indicator of the fascination of the public with these enormous mysterious creatures.

The third point is more specifically concerned with the History of Science. Burnett focuses the state of the history of zoological classification in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, which he refers to as the golden age of classifying imagination. This stresses the dominating presence of Carl Linnaeus and his proposals of a nomenclature and systematic taxonomy for the living world. The justification – indeed an explanation – of living creatures was mounting to announce the origin of species. This climate of uncertainty and contestation of an established natural order, so clearly related in the religious texts, was clear in the Restoration and even more in the aftermath of the Seven Years War when God’s hand was perceived as less present giving rise to an uncertainty of His purpose. In the colonies, however, God’s providence was still very decisive, ultimately incorporated in the Constitution. The absorption of new scientific ideas in the new United States of America was in conflict with the decisive role, hence the authority, of God. God’s word could not be challenged. The new natural order, proposed by European taxonomists, was contradictory to these feelings. A herald of the new scientific ideas which were building up in Europe was Samuel Latham Mitchill. He was invited by the lawyer of Samuel Judd to be a witness. Indeed, he assumed a prominent role in the process and is a central figure of this book. His arguments in the process reveal the status of scientific knowledge in the period and particularly in the new nation.

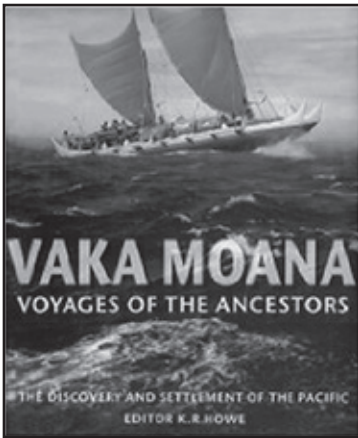
An important contribution of this book to the History of Science in the USA is the attention given to Samuel Latham Mitchill, a native of New York, born in 1764 of a Quaker family. Mitchill had visited Europe and returned to New York in 1786 with a medical degree, but was soon attracted to politics, studied law and, in 1790, was elected to the state assembly. Holding a successful practice as a physician and lecturing on natural history at Columbia College helped him to be elected, in 1800, to the U.S. House of Representatives and a later appointment to a Senate seat. He returned to New York in 1813 and until his death, in 1831, he was a founding or honorary member of about four dozen societies. He taught chemistry, botany, agriculture, and natural history, and was always involved in projects of public interest, such as hygiene, and even supported the Erie Canal project. He gave a very successful series of lectures on natural history at the *College of Physicians and Surgeons* and was a founding editor of *The Medical Repository*, the first US medical journal.

This was the moment when New York decided to change its reputation as an exclusively mercantile center, whose citizens were stigmatized as phlegmatic, money-

making and plodding. Boston and Philadelphia were recognized for their high regard for arts, letters and sciences. The founding, in 1816, of the *New York Institution of Learned and Scientific Establishments*, by a group of “gentlemen of taste & literature” is a result of this effort. By 1831, however, a lack of support caused the New York Institution to be terminated.

This very well-written book is organized in seven chapters, which reflect the three issues mentioned above. Eighteen plates and seventeen figures help to situate the urban and intellectual scenario in which the trial developed. An extensive bibliography and a generously organized index complete this book. It is a very important contribution to the relationship between science and society in the early years of American nation-building and nationalism.

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K. R. Howe, ed. *Vaka Moana, Voyages of the Ancestors: The Discovery and Settlement of the Pacific*. Honolulu, HI: University of Hawai‘i Press, 2006. Pp. 360, B & W and color plates, maps and charts, endnotes, index. Cloth US\$ 59.00 + ISBN 978-0-8248-3213-1.

It is not often that a critical publication is produced with all of the funding and effort that it deserves, but *Vaka Moana: Voyages of the Ancestors* is that special case. This multi-author volume featuring the original discovery and settlement of the Pacific Ocean was initiated by an exhibition of the same name which opened at the Auckland Museum, but the book is much more than just a companion product. *Vaka Moana*, 2007 winner of New Zealand Montana Book Awards for history, contains a large amount of specialized knowledge summarized by the major scholars in the field, along with beautiful full-page color photographs which blend art and artifact, many useful maps, and short tangential essays well-suited to expanding the range of each chapter. It is at once informative, accessible, and beautiful. Where there is some slight repetition between authors, each has a different perspective which lends to comparative understanding.

Vaka Moana accomplishes much of what it sets out to do, bringing to the public (in the words of K. R. Howe, the editor) the story of the world's first truly maritime people, "the last original human migration, and the first to require technology..."

Howe establishes the context of the story in the first chapter, setting Pacific voyaging firmly within the perspective of global human migration. Rawiri Taonui, in "Polynesian Oral Traditions," then begins to merge the religious and symbolic interpretation of oral traditions with the historical and geographic aspects of Pacific migration. He notes the difficulty of interpreting voyaging legends, and is critical of some of the work done in the past. Most oral histories deal with ancient ocean voyaging, but not with local trade closer to the present. Broad context and inclusion of oral traditions leads the way into the voyage of the text.

Geoffrey Irwin focuses on the moral formal interpretation of the archaeological evidence of Pacific migration in chapter three, "Voyaging and Settlement." The book's main theme of intentional deliberate voyaging, or "navigational theory," emerges here, clearly delineated in archeological, linguistic, and even bio-geographical (plant and animal economy) terms. Short additional essays add important information, such as Ho Chuan Kun's interjection on Taiwanese Austronesians (though only two pages...one might have hoped for more as DNA evidence is clearly confirming this link). Irwin includes insights from European voyages of exploration, a refreshing multi-cultural comparative approach for the topic.

Ben Finney then dives into the technical aspects of voyaging canoes, weaving the sail design and hull construction and stability aspects, etc. into the narrative of ocean migration quite eloquently. Finney examines in more detail the possible motives for the decline in Pacific voyaging, finding that voyaging innovation did not stall completely, did not even stop everywhere, but was only interrupted, a more nuanced interpretation than usual. Then chapter five, written by Finney and Sam Low, provides the basic theory of non-instrument navigation by retelling the story of the investigation of Pacific voyaging itself. The authors provide sketches of the individuals at the heart of what will become the voyaging and cultural renaissance (covered in Finney's chapter nine), a social revival critical to the continuation of Pacific identity. This is the story of Mau Piailug, David Lewis, Nainoa Thompson, and many others, and to have a sailor/scholar like Ben Finney provide a first-hand account of these subjects through three chapters assures the reader a maritime and marine perspective.

Roger Neick shifts gears in chapter six, “Voyaging After the Exploration Period,” with an examination of more contemporary oceanic voyaging evidence, from a multitude of locations like Tonga, Carolina Islands, Western Solomons, where ethnographic and historic evidence demonstrate that voyaging demands a high social commitment, or the involvement of the whole community. Contemporary information adds to the examination of ancient voyaging motives to the function and importance of voyaging for individual societies in ways beyond archaeological or linguistic evidence. Anne Salmond, in the following chapter, “Two Worlds,” does something of the same by reexamining the biography of Tupaia, a high priest of navigation and a central figure in our understanding and not ‘only a native who sailed with Captain Cook.’ In fact, more Pacific depth and voice emerge by appreciating the initial encounters between foreigners and Pacific Islanders as a two-way exchange of maritime information, with both sides eyeing the sailing craft of the other. The short shrift given to Cook’s own narrative is refreshing, as there is enough written on that topic elsewhere.

K. R. Howe picks up the theme of cultural encounters by delving into the historiography of “Western Ideas About Islander Origins” in chapter eight. As with other parts of the globe (China, for instance), the western ability to interpret and appreciate non-western sailing technology and navigation has been marred by a large deal of cross-cultural misunderstanding. Portraying Pacific Islanders as classical Greek statues did not help matters. Searching for Pacific origins in Semitic or Aryan roots simply raised larger obstacles which were overcome only with time by the growing understanding of the unique migration phenomenon in the Pacific.

Vaka Moana does several things well. The book maintains a clear and important acknowledgment of the cultural importance of the Pacific renaissance in voyaging. It makes impressive use of language and linguistics, blended with geographical and archaeological analysis and a consistent focus on voyaging technology. The canoe remains the vehicle on which the reader travels through this text. And *Vaka Moana* raises an important point: voyaging revival is not the precise replication of what might have been, but a blending of technologies and techniques, both new and old, into something unique and useful. As K. R. Howe puts it, the voyaging epic is the “ultimate expression of human curiosity, innovation, and daring.” He is not speaking in the past tense. The body of knowledge summarized in this book is still very much a part of what is taking place in the Pacific today.

Hans Van Tilburg
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SUBSCRIPTION and STAFF INFORMATION

The *Bulletin of the Pacific Circle* is the communication medium of the Pacific Circle, organized in 1985 to promote and assist scholarship in the history and social studies of Pacific science. The Circle is a commission of the International Union of the History and Philosophy of Science.

The *Bulletin* is distributed twice a year with the assistance of the Department of History, University of Hawai'i, Manoa. Membership in the Circle, which includes the *Bulletin*, is available at a cost of US\$20 per year for individuals and US\$30 for institutions. Additional contributions in any amount to support the costs of production and distribution will be gratefully accepted.

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