

THEMES IN INDIAN OCEAN MARITIME HISTORY

Leisure

The Indian Ocean has a long history of cruising, tourism and water sports such as yachting and scuba diving. Translations of Ibn Battuta's early 14th century journeys suggest he journeyed for personal satisfaction and leisure as much as for earning a living as a holy man. Cruising was well developed by the late 19th and early 20th centuries to allow the wealthy to set out on world tours.



Piracy and Poaching

Piracy and its suppression are ancient but ongoing phenomena in the Indian Ocean. The Cholas (India 3-13CE) sought to put down piracy (from their point of view) in the Strait of Malacca in the 11th century CE. The arrival of the Europeans introduced a new dimension for piracy and suppression of it in the region. Piracy continues to be of concern along the East African coast, Arabian Sea, Arakan coast, the Malacca Strait and elsewhere in South East Asia.



Maritime Archaeology

Communities around the Indian Ocean appreciate their maritime heritage. Museums in the region include the Pakistan Maritime Museum in Karachi (includes a mine sweeper and a midget submarine), the South African Maritime Museum in Cape Town, the Singapore Naval Museum, Malaysia's Maritime Archaeology Museum in Malacca, and museums in Indonesia, India and Western Australia. The Western Australian Maritime Museum is a pioneer in maritime archaeology, conservation and display. The Museum is also involved in the development of maritime archaeology across the Indian Ocean region

New Ports and Transport Networks

The rise of industrialism has led to changes in the mechanics of trade.



The changes brought by the transport revolutions in fuels (wind, coal, oil, gas and the emerging fuel cell technology), technologies (sail, steam, turbine and electric), miniaturisation (remote control and satellite navigation technologies) and 'majorisation' (super tankers, huge new ports) are influencing how we live but are often out of sight.



*The Australian Association
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