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Ships and Guns: The Sea Ordnance in Venice and Europe between the 15th and 17th Centuries by Carlo Beltrame; Renato Gianni Ridella

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Carlo Beltrame and Renato Gianni Ridella, eds. *Ships and Guns: The Sea Ordnance in Venice and Europe between the 15th and 17th Centuries*. Oxford: Oxbow Books, 2011. xii + 132 pp. illus. tbls. map. \$60. ISBN: 978-1-84217-969-7.

In early modern Europe, the technical development of naval ordnance and innovations in ship design resulted in the widespread use of shipboard artillery,

which played a primary role in European expansion and colonial hegemony. By the beginning of the fifteenth century, shipboard artillery was being effectively deployed in naval warfare, though small guns did appear on earlier ships. In underwater archaeology, artillery found on shipwrecks is often among the most diagnostic artifacts. Not only do cannons recovered from the sea establish the *terminus a quo* the ship sunk, but they may also display distinctive features, such as the gunfounder's name or coats of arms, which can provide the precise location of their production.

This volume assembles papers presented by experts on naval ordnance at the 2008 international symposium "Ships and Guns" that was organized in Venice by Carlo Beltrame and Renato Gianni Ridella. The volume is divided into three main chapters, discussing post-medieval naval ordnance and gun production in Venice, in Italy, and in Europe, respectively.

After the introduction by Sauro Gelichi and Mauro Librenti discussing maritime archaeology within the context of post-medieval submerged sites, chapter 1 ("Venetian Guns for and from the Sea") focuses on artillery production of the Serenissima. Marco Morin examines aspects of constructive techniques and morphology, bringing primary material and archival documents to his analysis. The excellent paper by Guido Candiani analyzes, throughout the years of the First War of Morea (1684–99), Venice's experimentation with new guns in the effort to match the capabilities of the Ottoman naval force. Carlo Beltrame presents a series of guns, mostly already published, from Venetian wrecks scattered along the coast of the Eastern Mediterranean and the Atlantic Ocean. New discoveries are discussed by Rossella Scordato, who examines two sixteenth-century Venetian swivel guns recovered from the Straits of Messina, and by Sebastiano Tusa, who presents the cannons belonging to the Venetian warship *Tigre* that sunk off the coast of Cyrenaica in 1705.

Chapter 2 ("Italian Production of Naval Ordnance between the fifteenth and the seventeenth century") concentrates on production of naval artillery in Italy. Renato Gianni Ridella discusses sea ordnance aboard Genoese ships based on archival material and archaeological evidence, whereas Furio Ciciliot presents the families who dominated bombard production in Savona (Genoa) as recorded in notarial documents. The paper by Niccolò Capponi is most interesting for its discussion of Cosimo I de' Medici's naval policy of reorganizing and arming the Florentine fleet in a political-economic perspective. The chapter concludes with the valuable information provided by Irena Radić Rossi, who presents cannons and guns of various production recovered from shipwrecks off the water of Croatia.

The final chapter ("European Ordnance aboard Ships, Fifteenth-Seventeenth Centuries") targets sea artillery production in England, France, Germany, and Spain. The swivel gun is examined in detail by Javier López Martín, who distinguishes six different categories based on shape and marks. Colin Martin offers an accurate study of the 1588 Spanish Armada artillery recovered from several wrecks off the water of England. Ruth Brown's excellent paper discusses the highly sought-after English iron gunfounding industry (1550–1650) and its Northern

European customers. Robert D. Smith brings together a wealth of documentation from English libraries and archives, and presents several inventories of artillery carried aboard the Tudor navy from 1495 to 1603. Martino Ferrari Bravo brilliantly examines the technical development of the British sea service mortar by discussing the drawings contained in the seventeenth-century album by the lieutenant general Albert Borgard (1659–1751). Sixteenth-century French sea artillery with an emphasis on the naval ordnance of the *Grande Maîtresse*, the ship bought by Louise of Savoy for the kingdom of France in 1526, is the topic of the interesting paper presented by Max Guénot.

The volume promotes a serious dialogue between maritime archaeologists and historians of naval artillery. While a discussion specifically devoted to Ottoman naval ordnance and the gun production at the Tophane in Constantinople would have further enriched and better framed the subject of this volume with a more complete perspective, scholars will certainly find many aids to further research in the impressive amount of archival and archaeological material contained in this book.

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