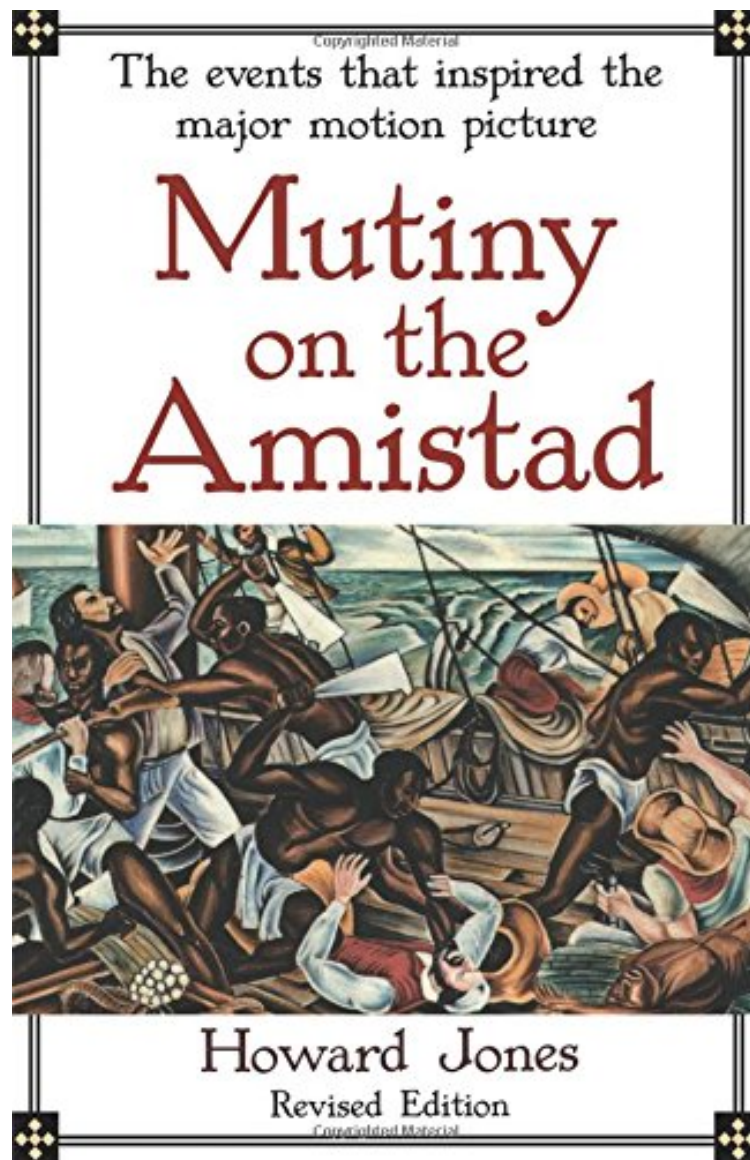


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Mutiny on the Amistad: The Saga of a Slave Revolt and Its Impact on American Abolition, Law, and Diplomacy

Howard Jones

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This volume presents the first full-scale treatment of the only instance in history where African blacks, seized by slave dealers, won their freedom and returned home. Jones describes how, in 1839, Joseph Cinqué led a revolt on the Spanish slave ship, the *Amistad*, in the Caribbean. The seizure of the ship by an American naval vessel near Montauk, Long Island, the arrest of the Africans in Connecticut, and the Spanish protest against the violation of their property rights created an international controversy. The *Amistad* affair united Lewis Tappan and other abolitionists who put the "law of nature" on trial in the United States by their refusal to accept a legal system that claimed to dispense justice while permitting artificial distinctions based on race or color. The mutiny resulted in a trial before the U.S. Supreme Court that pitted former President John Quincy Adams against the federal government. Jones vividly recaptures this compelling drama--the most famous slavery case before *Dred Scott*--that climaxed in the court's ruling to free the captives and allow them to return to Africa.

From Library Journal In this well-crafted narrative Jones has fleshed out what was heretofore a footnote in the history of the American antislavery movement. The cause of the small band of black slaves who had mutinied during transport off Cuba and eventually washed up on Long Island (1839) temporarily united disparate factions of the fledgling abolitionist movement. Besides raising fundamental legal questions about the relevance of slavery and race to the American conception of liberty, the *Amistad* affair adversely affected relations between the United States and Spain and forced President Van Buren into improper interference with the judicial process. A key volume for scholars of 19th-century America and for specialists in the abolitionist movement. Thomas E. Schott, Office of History, Engineering Installation Division, Tinker Air Force Base, Oklahoma Copyright 1987 Reed Business Information, Inc. "A nearly flawless historical study of an important episode in American diplomatic, legal, political, and ethnic history; Mutiny on the *Amistad* raises important questions in all of these fields and is highly recommended reading."--*Journal of American Ethnic History* "Mutiny on the *Amistad* is based on thorough research and provides excellent and detailed coverage of its subject. It makes important contributions both to the history of slavery and to abolition, especially on the legal aspects of each."--*Journal of Southern History* "[A] well-documented study of the *Amistad* affair.... Lively."--*The New York of Books* "An analysis of an important moment in American history that casts a light upon politics and society during the preceding half-century, back to the Constitution and the Declaration of Independence, and similarly illumines the approaching Civil War."--*The National* "An impressive piece of work.... A well organized book, handsomely illustrated, generously documented.... Valuable and illuminating."--*Civil War History* "A rousing and satisfying tale, and it is well worth hearing it again in this careful and thoughtful telling."--*American Heritage* About the Author Howard Jones is Professor of History at the University of Alabama and author of *The Course of American Diplomacy* and *To the Webster-Ashburton Treaty*.