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'The Sea is Swinging Into View': Modern British Maritime History in a Globalised World

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DAVID CANNADINE has recently argued that ‘one of the key themes’ of modern British history had become ‘*the sea*; for both the British world, and Britain's relations with the world beyond its own dominions, were defined in maritime terms, and should be understood in such terms’. Such a statement would have been very unlikely even a few years ago.¹ British maritime history has

recently been enjoying something of a renaissance, to judge from the proliferation of essay collections and special journal editions on the subject. *The William and Mary Quarterly* published a special issue in July 2005 on 'the Atlantic economy in an era of revolutions', as well as a forum entitled 'beyond the Atlantic' in October 2006. No longer, the journal declared, were great upheavals and revolutions to be seen only as...

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