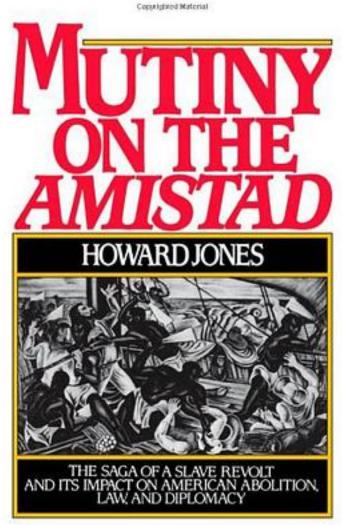
Mutiny on the "Amistad"



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Published to coincide with Steven Spielberg's forthcoming movie "Amistad", this is the story of the only instance in history where African blacks, seized by slave dealers, won their freedom and returned home. Howard Jones describes how, in 1839, Joseph Cinque led a revolt on the Spanish slave ship, the Amistad, in the Caribbean. Allowing only the captain and first mate to live in order to steer the ship back to Sierra Leone, the Africans were tricked and taken to New York. 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 colour. The mutiny resulted in a trial before the US Supreme Court that pitted former President John Quincy Adams against the federal government. The author portrays the drama of one of the most famous slavery cases which climaxed in the court's ruling to free the captives and allow them to return to Africa.

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