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Nota di contenuto	Preliminary Material / R. W. Unger -- Chapter One. Shipping, Productivity And Economic Growth / Jan Lucassen and Richard W. Unger -- Chapter Two. Productivity Changes In Shipping In The Dutch Republic: The Evidence From Freight Rates, 1550–1800 / Milja Van Tielhof and Jan Luiten Van Zanden -- Chapter Three. The Strange Tale Of The Decline Of Spanish Shipping / Regina Grafe -- Chapter Four. Productivity In English Atlantic Shipping In The Seventeenth Century: Evidence From The Navigation Acts / Nuala Zahedieh -- Chapter Five. Institutions And The Environment: Shipping Movements In The North Sea/Baltic Zone, 1650–1800 / David J. Ormrod -- Chapter Six. Productivity Change In Eighteenth Century Finnish Shipping / Jari Ojala -- Chapter Seven. The Macau-Nagasaki Route (1570–1640): Portuguese Ships And Their Cargoes / Rui Manuel Loureiro -- Chapter Eight. Why Shipping “Declined” In China From The Middle Ages To The Nineteenth Century / Kent G. Deng -- Chapter Nine. Operational Efficiencies And The Decline Of The Chinese Junk Trade In The Eighteenth And Nineteenth Centuries: The Connection / Paul A. Van Dyke -- Chapter

Ten. Ship Design And Energy Use, 1350–1875 / Richard W. Unger -- Chapter Eleven. Work On The Docks: Sailors' Labour Productivity And The Organization Of Loading And Unloading / Jan Lucassen -- Chapter Twelve. Total Factor Productivity For The Royal Navy From Victory At Texel (1653) To Triumph At Trafalgar (1805) / Patrick Karl O' Brien and Xavier Duran -- Chapter Thirteen. Sailors, National And International Labour Markets And National Identity, 1600–1850 / Jelle Van Lottum , Jan Lucassen and Lex Heerma Van Voss -- Chapter Fourteen. Characterization Of Technological Change In The Shipping Industry, 1350–1800 / Xavier Duran -- Chapter Fifteen. Seaports As Centres Of Economic Growth: The Portuguese Case, 1500–1800 / Amélia Polónia -- Bibliography / R. W. Unger -- List Of Contributors / R. W. Unger -- Index / R. W. Unger.

Sommario/riassunto

In sixteen essays authors explore the dramatic rise in the efficiency of European shipping in the three centuries before the Industrial Revolution. They offer reasons for the greater success of the sector than any other in making better use of labor. They describe the roots - political, organizational, technological, ecological, human - of rising productivity, treating those sources both theoretically and empirically. Comparisons with China show why Europeans came to dominate Asian waters. Building on past research, the volume is a statement of what is known about that critical sector of the early modern European economy and indicates the contribution shipping made to the emergence of the West as the dominant force on the oceans of the world.
