Open Access Book Review, (2018) October 2026 version: Pages 37–39
All Rights Reserved License CC BY-NC-ND Copyright. Author: Sevket Akyildiz
Research Notes & Study Resource Series 2026

The Stolen Village:

Baltimore and the Barbary Pirates

Des Ekin (2008), The O'Brien Press, Dublin
Pp. 488, ISBN: 978-1847174314

Reviewer: **Sevket AKYILDIZ**[1]

The Stolen Village: Baltimore and the Barbary Pirates

Des Ekin's '*The Stolen Village*' is a good popular history based upon archival material and thoughtful analysis. It concerns a corsair raid on Baltimore, West Cork, Ireland, in 1631 CE. Ekin's writing style is readable and straightforward—he's a trained journalist. Arguably, in the genre of corsair pirates of North Africa, this book is one of the better studies on the market. I did enjoy reading it. I feel that Ekin is trying to make an honest and fair attempt to understand why the raid took place and who was behind it. And more importantly, how it impacted the lives of the innocent English and Irish captives.

Ekin's research is balanced and extensive – the story moves from southern Ireland to Morocco and Holland, and Algiers to Istanbul –, and his

[1] Sevket Akyildiz, PhD, 2011, School of Oriental and African Studies, University of London, Open Researcher and Contributor Identity: ORCID https://orcid.org/0000-0001-9545-4432

Sevket originally published this book review on 28th August 2018 on GoodReads.com. Available: https://www.goodreads.com/book/show/4881890-the-stolen-village

The book review presented here is an edited version of Sevket's original 2018 work.

All Rights Reserved License CC BY-NC-ND Copyright. Author: Sevket Akyildiz

arguments are reasonable and considered (including the conspiracy theory view noted in the final chapter).

Furthermore, Ekin addresses the motivations of ethnically diverse pirates, renegade seamen, Irish Catholic elites, Protestant settlers in Baltimore (Ireland), English elites, and the dynamics of the seventeenth-century enslaved peoples in West Europe and the Ottoman realms. He emphasises the multicultural and multilingual nature of the port town of Algiers; he seeks to clarify the mindset and politics of Muslim society in North Africa (and, to some extent, in the Ottoman metropolis of Istanbul).

Ekin's conclusions rest upon plausible arguments, and he highlights the complexity of the 'stolen village' story. His research is more than adequate for the task. We can only feel empathy for the English settlers torn away from their homes and families.

The book discusses the main characters from all sides of the story, and considers their personal and political histories. The author highlights the Irish and English national and local histories of the period. He recreates events and adds a human element to the narrative. The explanations of the pirate legacy in North America, particularly in New York, are fascinating.

Still, I have some critical points to note concerning Ekin's work. While the author makes a good attempt at linking the events of June 1631 CE with contemporary politics and criminal actions, I am not totally convinced that some of the language used was suitable; it's rather speculative and emotive, and might be deployed in the wrong context; furthermore, the author fails to define his terminology. This leaves the book, in places, open to an ambiguous interpretation. For instance: '*Islamist jihad*' (p. 9); '*endless jihad*' (p. 10); '*Islamist empire*' (p. 10); '*invasion*' (p. 10); '*ethnic cleansing*' (p.10); '*Islamist invasion*' (p. 118). Also, some of the language used is arguably orientalist: '*curved slippers*'; '*the plumes*' (p. 19); '*crescent moon*' (p. 23).

Nonetheless, I repeat myself here: I did enjoy reading this book; Ekin explores ideas and concepts freely and does not stifle debate.

Source:
Des Ekin, '*The Stolen Village: Baltimore and the Barbary Pirates*', The O'Brien Press: Dublin (2008).

All Rights Reserved License CC BY-NC-ND Copyright. Author: Sevket Akyildiz

Review's word total: 459 words.

Sevket Akyildiz wrote this book review **without** plagiarism. October 2026.

The written component of the book review was produced **without** using AI.

Ethical Statement: No ethical issues to report.

Site: https://sevket-akyildiz.com

Harvard reference style: Sevket Akyildiz. (2018, 2026) Des Ekin, *The Stolen Village: Baltimore and the Barbary Pirates*, The O'Brien Press: Dublin, 2008 [Preprint]. Available:



Akyildiz