

Kathy Tran

ANTHRO1218: Shipwrecks and Seafarers, Piracy and Plundering: An Introduction to Maritime Archaeology

Michelle Damian

Peabody Museum Project Reflection

In participating in this project with the Peabody Museum and having the chance to write my own museum label, I gained a greater appreciation of the amount of work and research that goes into displaying collection pieces. From my own experience with researching *Sailing Ship Model*, I was initially at a loss as to where to even begin and how to write about a ship model that had no context other than it was Japanese and an accompanying document stating that it was similar to a different kind of ship, the Chinese junk ship. Given the scarcity of information at hand, I was surprised to find that the more I probed into the historical and cultural background, and unique construction of the ship, the more I began to realize the significance of the object I was working with. I can only imagine what other museum researchers must feel when they are tasked with learning about an object with even less information than I did. Nevertheless, I have found this project to be particularly unique in terms of allowing students to directly interact with emblems of history and the lack of direction only served to provide more freedom and interpretation into the analyses of the ship. Being a non-archaeologist, this project gave me the opportunity to interact with a discipline I was not familiar with in a way that was engaging and unique as well as beneficial to the Peabody Museum.