

INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE

FRENCH SOCIETY OF MARITIME HISTORY
CENTER FOR RESEARCH IN INTERNATIONAL AND ATLANTIC HISTORY
FRANÇOIS VIETE CENTER, EPISTEMOLOGY, HISTORY OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

THURSDAY 20 SEPTEMBER-FRIDAY 21 SEPTEMBER 2012

SHIPBUILDING, NEW APPROACHES, NEW TOOLS

An international conference devoted to shipbuilding from the Antiquity to the current period is organized by the French Society of Maritime History, the Center for Research in International and Atlantic History and the François Viète Center at the university of Nantes. The conference will be held in Nantes/Saint Nazaire on 20th-21st September 2012.

First of all, the aim of the conference is to identify the main periods of change in the elaboration of patterns of shipbuilding from the Antiquity to the current period, in as many geographical and cultural areas as possible. Besides, the emphasis will be laid on the boat strictly speaking, whatever its environment (river, sea, or both). By taking into account the latest archaeological research, approaches combining the perspectives of historians, historians of technology and art historians, various treatises on shipbuilding, and iconographic sources, what is at stake is the elaboration of new modes of interpreting the emergence of patterns of boats and the very way they were built. Numerous periods of shift have already been identified, focusing on major changes : the switch from a shipbuilding resting on assembling of planking by the ligature to the recourse to pins and mortises in the archaic period in Greece ; or the switch from a « longitudinal on planking » construction, to a « transverse on rib » construction in the Mediterranean of the late Antiquity and the beginning of the High Middle Ages ; or the slow evolution of the ship on the line between the 16th and 17th centuries. As far as the contemporary period is concerned, the issues of motorization and the use of metal are obviously paramount, and the questions of prefabrication and gigantic scales prevail in the second half of the 20th century. There are many examples of major technological changes, and all of them are worth being reexamined in the light of recent research and new archaeological excavations conducted in the past twenty years. By referring to these works which, for various historical periods, challenge the idea of a would-be linearity (of the evolution or the technical changes in shipbuilding), our point will be to question the hypothesis according to which a common emergence of patterns of boats may have been possible in close or distant geographical and cultural areas. Besides, it might well be relevant to pay attention to the life cycles of such boat patterns and to try and understand their technological, scientific evolution. Under such circumstances, and whenever possible, we shall try to emphasize the influences and exchanges which in turn gave rise to the emergence of these patterns. Because of its most technical dimension, shipbuilding led to technology transfers which sometimes evolved into original syntheses, according to the various geographical or cultural environments. Highlighting these transfers and the occasional modifications that went with them,

putting them in historical perspective, was made possible by the discovery of precise materials (wrecks, images...), or by the identification of the personal paths of individuals involved in the techniques of shipbuilding, or by the discovery of different technical treatises of men who were more or less involved in shipbuilding. Besides, from a methodological standpoint, it will undoubtedly be useful to assess the value of modelling and digital reconstructions, which allowed to renew the way of considering the boat as an object of study.

If the results of these analyses will definitely be studied with utmost care, the complementarity of these approaches will also be put forward in this conference, as well as the different methods of the various scientific fields (combined works of historians, archaeologists, and historians of technology; dialogue between archaeology and history). Thus, a wide range of proposals are welcome. Not only proposals deriving from individual research, but also more collective perspectives will be appreciated (from specific research programs or missions). Besides, our ambition is positively interdisciplinary. Apart from archaeology and history, the conference is open to other scientific fields and to heritage workers (associations etc).

Contact and registration

- Location of the conference : Nantes and Saint-Nazaire (France)
- Organization committee : french society of maritime history, Center for Research in International and Atlantic History and François Viete Center, Epistemology, History of Science and Technology
- Please send proposals to : david.plouviez@univ-nantes.fr
jean-louis.kerouanton@univ-nantes.fr
- Deadline for submissions of the proposals : 1 March 2012
- The registration form will include a title and an abstract of no more than a page, a short CV of no more than a page.
- Scientific Council : Martine Acerra (university of Nantes), Sylviane Llinarès (university of Lorient), Sylvian Laubé (university of Brest), Grégory Chambon (university of Brest), Eric Rieth (CNRS/university of Paris-I-Sorbonne), Olivier Raveux (university of Aix-en-Provence), Michel L'Hour (director of DRASSM), Christophe Cérino (university of Lorient), Jean-Louis Kerouanton (university of Nantes) et David Plouviez (university of Nantes).

Organization

- Languages of the conference : French and English
- Registration fees : 25 euros
- Accommodation and travelling expenses will be borne for participants, as well as meals (lunch and dinner on Thursday, lunch on Friday)

Publication

- The papers should be sent no later than 1 March 2013 (40000 signs at most)

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Name	
First name	
email	
Title of the paper	

Abstract of the paper :

Presentation of the author :