New volume of International Journal of Maritime History

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How, when and why did you find an interest in maritime history?

It is difficult to answer this question precisely, given that the roots of my research are in the study of the history of the Republic of Venice, I suppose the sea was always there for me as a crucial element of historical development. At the same time (when asked!) I actually define myself as a ‘socio-economic historian of early modern Europe’, still surprised at the omnipresence of the maritime issues at the root of all the fundamental issue behind the history of that period, and the onset of that most controversial issue of ‘modernity’.

What – in your opinion – is particularly fascinating about maritime history?

The sea is an extreme environment, and it brings out the best and the worst of human nature, hence the ‘fascination’ that many feel towards its history. Personally,
and to be utterly honest, I feel some unease when the expression ‘fascinating’ is applied to scholarship, as it seems to imply some form of ‘enchantment’, not the best friend of research! What I find profoundly interesting is that a maritime perspective allows us to analyse and discuss all types of historical development – political, social, economic and cultural – bringing together the concerns of both ‘rulers and the ruled’ across all periods.

*Which maritime history books have made a “lasting” impression on you? Why?*

I would single out two classics: Frederic Lane’s Venice: a Maritime Republic, and Ralph Davis’ The Rise of the English Shipping Industry. At first glance these are very different books, with very different structures, aims and audiences. However, both provide authoritative interpretations based on solid archival work, raise a lot of new questions (which is the mark of proper analyses) and are written in elegant and engaging prose. The latter being a rare gift amongst us scholars!

*What are the main questions maritime historians still have to find answers for?*

I could not agree more with Skip Fischer and Jesús Valdaliso that more should be done to increase the comparative element in maritime history. My view is that a more intensive engagement with the study of trans-national issues will also help to break free from traditional nation-based narratives. In recent years the study of ‘science’ and the ‘law’ within a maritime environment are strongly emerging, and I am looking forward to see how these new approaches will shape the field in the coming years.

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**New book: Maritimes Mittelalter**

Michael Borgolte / Nikolas Jaspert (Eds.)

Maritimes Mittelalter

Meere als Kommunikationsräume

Vorträge und Forschungen, Band 83

Available at: [http://www.thorbecke.de/maritimes-mittelalter-p-2079.html](http://www.thorbecke.de/maritimes-mittelalter-p-2079.html)
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For author guidelines, please visit: http://msc.emeraldinsight.com/

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New book: From Cabin ‘Boys’ to Captains – 250 years of Woman at Sea

By Jo Stanley

Traditionally, a woman’s place was never on stormy seas. But actually thousands of dancers, purserettes, doctors, stewardesses, captains and conductresses have taken to the waveson everything from floating palaces to battered windjammers. Their daring story is barely known, even by today’s seawomen. From before the 1750s, women fancying an oceangoing life had either to disguise themselves as cabin ‘boys’ or acquire a cooperative husband with a ship attached. Early pioneers faced superstition and discrimination in the briny ‘monasteries’. Today women captain cruise ships as big as towns and work at the highest level in the global maritime industry. This comprehensive exploration looks at the Merchant Navy, comparing it to the Royal Navy in which Wrens only began sailing in 1991. Using interviews and sources never before published, Jo Stanley vividly reveals the incredible journey across time taken by these brave and lively women salts.
About the IMEHA Newsletter

The IMEHA Newsletter is published by the International Maritime Economic History Association (IMEHA) with the aim of promoting maritime history globally and strengthening collaboration between maritime researchers. Edited by the Executive Board of IMEHA, the IMEHA Newsletter features brief news on upcoming conferences, book releases, scholarships, job-announcements etc. within the field of maritime history. The Newsletter appears a couple of times per year.

All scholars who wish to make announcements to colleagues about maritime history issues are encouraged to do so through the IMEHA Newsletter. If you have news that you would like to share, please provide this by e-mail to IMEHA Executive Board Secretary René Taudal Poulsen at rtp.ino@cbs.dk

The Newsletter is also available on LinkedIn, where the IMEHA hosts a group under the name of the International Maritime Economic History Association. Scholars with an interest in the maritime world are also encouraged to sign-up for free for the LinkedIn group.

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