

MARITIME LABOUR HISTORY WORKING GROUP (EUROPEAN LABOR HISTORY NETWORK)

Newsletter No 14, 31 August 2021.

WARM GREETINGS

We hope that this Newsletter finds you and your families in good health and high spirits.

We are still in the midst of a worldwide crisis that impacts on us not only in the personal and familiar circle but also in the professional and academic spheres. Due to the situation, we have seen the slowdown or the total stop of research activities, the postponement of some conferences, the delays in publications, the obstacles in the access to archives and libraries, etc., and, above all, a confusing time. It is a rough sea for maritime history as well.



Given the spread of the coronavirus it has been difficult to draw plans about meetings or activities, but we should keep spirits up so the Working Group should go on. To maintain a minimum contact after a long time and to keep the colours flying, we would like to summarize the situation from the working group point of view.

European Labour History Network and the future

Due to the circumstances, the representatives of the different working groups met on Friday 8 May in a virtual conference through Zoom. During this meeting the coordinators of the different working groups discussed different options about the internal organization of the network, etc.

To sum up, the fourth ELHN Conference is currently celebrating from 30 August to 1 September 2021 at Vienna University. It will be a joint event of the European Labour History Network and the COST Action “Worlds of Related Coercions in Work” (WORCK). The 4th ELHN Conference has taken place as a hybrid event. There are more than 300 people registered altogether. About one third of the registered persons will participate on-site, while two thirds take part from remote.

You can find the last version of the programme and general information about the event at the conference website: <https://www.worck.eu/conference-2-2021-vienna/>.

Another important question to take into consideration is the improvement of the ELHN structure, that is, the Organizational Structure. A core group to maintain the network will be called Network Committee and will ensure a permanent structure with Chair and Vice Chair to be elected at the General Assembly. Other points were the use of the website or how to relate to GLHN. A new meeting of the Working Group coordinators has been scheduled on 1 September, so more information will be provided after the conference in Vienna. Among other things, a proposal for a 5th new ELHN Conference at Upsala, Sweden, will be discussed.

POSTPOSED CONFERENCES

IMHA 8th International Congress of Maritime History- IMHA

This conference, to be held at Porto had been delayed and the new date is 28 June to 3 July 2022. Although Working Group as such had not proposed a particular set of sessions, some members will participate in this meeting with two maritime sessions: *Mediterranean Maritime Shipping and Labor in Transition*, and *Mediterranean Maritime Communities and Ports in Transition*.

WEHC (World Economic History Congress)

The IEHA Executive Committee moved the event. This conference is to be held at Paris, 25-29 July 2022. Some members of the Working Group submitted a panel proposal that has been accepted under the title *Resources and Human Factor in Maritime Industries*.

European Association of Urban History (EAUH)

Our colleague Kristof Loockx (University of Antwerp) informs us that the European Association of Urban History (EAUH) organizes a conference in Antwerp 2022. Since the conference was postponed last year and research constantly evolves, the organizers decided to open another call for sessions. The deadline is 30 October 2021, which is short notice, but it would be great to have more sessions that deal with port cities.

For your information, a session should be complete, with all participants and abstracts. You can find more information following this link: <https://www.uantwerpen.be/en/conferences/eauh2022/>

Kristof will submit a session on sailortowns. The aim is to better understand how larger structural changes in port cities effected maritime quarters, and vice versa (demographically, socially, economically, etc.). Kistof invites us to join the session; if you wish, please contact with him at kristof.loockx@uantwerpen.be.

NETWORKS

For those who are interested both in port labour and in Ibero-American countries, there is a new network that could fill a gap in our field of research. The *Red de Investigación Iberoamericana en Comunidades Marítimas (RIICoMa)* is a network launched recently by some scholars, (among them some members of our working group). Its aim is to bring together studies, projects and views on Ibero-American maritime labour in a broad sense, mainly from a “maritime community” approach.



Though the history of maritime labour is the core of the network. Researchers working on maritime labour history in general are encouraged

to join the network if geographically fits with your interest.
<https://riicoma.org>

At the present some members of the network are working in a project about the history of the dock workers of ibero-american ports. The project covers 17 ports from Argentina, Brasil, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Cuba, Spain, and México that are represented through 20 scholarships. You can find more information at <https://riicoma.org/proyectos/proyecto-sobre-la-historia-del-trabajo-portuario-en-iberoamerica/>

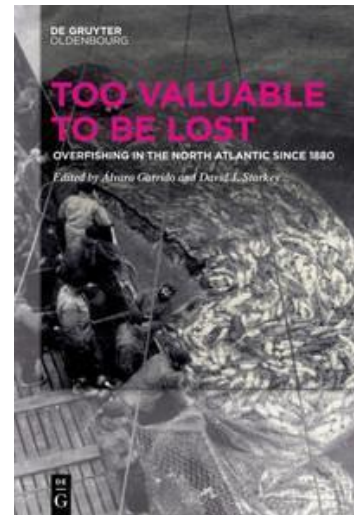
PUBLICATIONS

Although they cannot be considered strictly news, let us inform you about some publications that could be of your interest.

Migrations and communities are topics that generate very interesting books. An example is *Migrants and the Making of the Urban-Maritime World. Agency and Mobility in Port Cities, c. 1570–1940*. Edited By Christina Reimann, Martin Öhman. 2021. ISBN 9780367543617. Published September 4 2020 by Routledge. 304 Pages 16 B/W Illustrations
<https://www.routledge.com/Migrants-and-the-Making-of-the-Urban-Maritime-World-Agency-and-Mobility/Reimann-Ohman/p/book/9780367543617>

For those interested in dockers and port labour, we inform you about the recent publication of two articles. The first, by Brendan J. von Briesen is “The guild [...] manufactures nothing, nor produces any artifact”: Barcelona’s Seven Maritime Cargo Handling Guilds, c.1760-1840, *International Review of Social History* (2020), pp 1-33 (DOI: 10.1017/S0020859020000012). Linked with wider research, a PhD dissertation, this article focuses on the complexity of port labour in a city such as Barcelona, where ancient regulations, custom and legal development collided frequently and the categorization of work.

Too Valuable to be Lost. Overfishing in the North Atlantic since 1880. Edited by: Álvaro Garrido and David J. Starkey. De Gruyter Oldenbourg. 2020. DOI: 10.1515/9783110641738



This collective book is a multidisciplinary approach on a key-topic for our common future: overfishing. The focus is addressed to the "Atlantic World", considering the main oceanic geography in which this problem was born in the early 20th century. As well as economic or biological aspects, the social impact of this issue has been considered in the book. As fishermen and coastal communities are one of the branches of the topics of interest for our Working Group, we recommend this publication. The impact on labour and workers should be considered as another impact of mechanization in the fishing industries that deserves closer analysis.

On professional groups, we propose the reading of the article by Enric Garcia-Domingo, "The Long Road to Recognition: The Profession of Ship Engineer in the Spanish Merchant Marine, 1877–1980", 321-344, in *Labour History in the Semi-periphery. Southern Europe, 19th-20th centuries*. Edited by: Leda Papastefanaki and Nikos Potamianos. De Gruyter Oldenbourg. 2021. In this case, the subject is the struggle to gain recognition of the Spanish ship engineers. In a struggle that has parallel aspects in other national mercantile marines, this professional group fought to be recognized as a university-level learning, not only a vocational second-level studies.

We invite you to send your proposals to *Drassana, journal of the Museu Marítim de Barcelona*. This is a veteran journal, but in the last years the editors had worked discreetly to turn the journal into a quality publication, gradually fulfilling all the requirements of a scientific journal. *Drassana* focuses on the Spanish and Mediterranean issues, and now it is published in digital format, on an Open Journal System platform. You can access it directly through the link <https://revistadrassana.cat/index.php/Drassana>.

Contributions will be welcomed. Although it is a Catalan journal, it publishes articles in Catalan, Spanish, English, French and Italian.

AWARDS

A French academic prize, Le prix Maitron 2020, was awarded to Gwendal Dugast, for an academic work (Mémoire de M2) entitled *Des ouvriers marins à l'ère industrielle: le personnel des machines dans la navigation maritime à vapeur à Nantes et Saint-Nazaire (1857-1932)*. The research has



been done under the direction of Dr. David Plouviez, Université de Nantes.

Using the classical sources of Social History and especially unpublished sources regarding the Nantes maritime community, but also using

literature, Dugast explores the generally forgotten world of the engine room and boiler's room workers. Invisible, without the tradition and the roots of the traditional seamen, these industrial workers were essential actors in the transformation of the shipping industry. We hope to see this work published soon.

PLEASE SEND US INFORMATION ABOUT BOOKS, RESEARCH IN PROGRESS, EXHIBITIONS, CONFERENCES OR ANY SUBJECT THAT MIGHT BE OF INTEREST FOR THE GROUP. NEW INFORMATION WILL BE POSTED IN THE NEXT NEWSLETTER.

IF YOU DO NOT WISH TO RECEIVE THIS NEWSLETTER PLEASE SEND AN E-MAIL TO US AND YOUR E-MAIL ADDRESS WILL BE DELETED FROM THE LIST OF SUBSCRIBERS.

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