



New Researchers Conference 12/13 March 2021

Sponsored by The Society for Nautical Research

Delivered via Zoom

Friday 12th March

15:00 Welcome introduction, Dr Cathryn Pearce, Chairman, British Commission for Maritime History

15:10 Doing Maritime History in the Age of Covid-19

A roundtable of academics led by Dr James Davey (University of Exeter) and Dr Richard Blakemore (University of Reading):

Saturday 13 March

10:00 -11:30 Session One: Mercantile Maritime History

Opening welcome: Dr Helen Doe, Vice Chairman, British Commission for Maritime History

Chaired by Professor Maria Fusaro, University of Exeter

Peter Phillipson, University of Hull

Pioneering quality assurance and risk mitigation: the contribution of Lloyd's Register to improvements in the safety of merchant shipping, 1834-1881

The International Association of Classification Societies (IACS) was founded in 1968 and currently has 12 members, responsible for certifying the safety of 90% of the world's cargo-carrying ships' tonnage. Members set rules and standards for vessel design and construction, while carrying out regular surveys to ensure through-life compliance.

Lloyd's Register, the oldest member of IACS, was founded in 1760 but began operating under a new constitution in 1834, following a long dispute over its structure and methods which had taken it to the brink of bankruptcy. 1881 saw the retirement of Thomas Chapman, a remarkable Chairman who had served for 46 years and is generally regarded as "the Father of Lloyd's Register".

The period 1834-1881 was marked by intense technological change and shipping was at the forefront of this. Wooden sailing ships were largely superseded by iron-hulled steamers, and iron itself was subsequently replaced by steel: craft traditions gave way to engineering design. Amid this upheaval, the Register strove to improve merchant vessel safety, applying practices established in the 1834 reconstitution, nowadays termed quality assurance and risk mitigation. Every year, the condition of thousands of ships around the world was checked, using a system based on the strict application of standards developed in-house, not the opinion of an individual surveyor.

It can be argued that the pioneering approach utilized by Chapman's team helped shape the path of

nineteenth century technological development far beyond the maritime sphere and provides beneficial insights into the successful management of changing technology still applicable today.

Biography

Peter Phillipson is a Chartered Structural Engineer, born in 1955, who worked until 2006 as a director of a multi-discipline engineering consultancy employing over 500 staff. The unexpected chance to take early retirement offered an irresistible opportunity to pursue other interests and take on new challenges, while still young enough to do so.

Studying for a BSc in Civil Engineering at the University of Leeds in the 1970s equipped Peter with a vocational degree which provided a route into a successful and enjoyable career. Twelve years of post-retirement study at the University of Hull since 2006 has also proved very rewarding, albeit for reasons related to personal fulfilment rather than professional development.

Re-entering the academic world allowed a rekindling of interest in Languages and History, subjects enjoyed greatly at school but dropped at sixteen in favour of the Mathematics, Physics and Chemistry “A” levels necessary for entry to an engineering degree.

Peter obtained a BA in Spanish in 2010, following this with a BA Joint Italian and History in 2014, before returning to the field of engineering through study for an MSc in Renewable Energy completed in 2017. Following a successful application for a Lloyds Register Foundation Thomas Chapman Scholarship, Peter began PhD research in February 2019 and is based at the University of Hull Blaydes Maritime Centre..

Toslina Khatun, SOAS

Carolingian Connections to the Arab Indian Ocean Trade

The Carolingians are best known for their involvement in the starting of the era of Renaissance and their founder Charlemagne and his exploits. The Arab influence behind the introduction of the Caroline script; the reintroduction of Greek medicine using South Asia spices and other raw materials; and the Arab involvement of getting all of this across the Mediterranean is less present in the current historiography. Involvement of Jewish traders from Egypt and how pivotal they were for this trade is also only really covered by scholars such as Goitein who really focuses on the Geniza records but does not expand out of that to analyse what this meant for European society at large. This paper intend to explore the socio-political effects of constant trading contact between the Arabs and the Carolingians in the early medieval period.

Biography

Toslina is a current second year PhD student at SOAS reading Near and Middle Easter Studies and History. The title of her thesis is 'The socio-political effects of the external trade of the Caliphate between 700-1000 CE'. Before this she received a masters in Medieval History from King's College London where she focused on medieval coinage and had her work published at the University of Genoa Polytechnic.

Mark Hoskin, Greenwich University

The lifespan of English shipping to Asia in the 17th century

The issue of shipworm Teredinidae, was known before Sir Walter Raleigh’s circumnavigation of the world in 1577-1580, yet no forms of prevention appear to have been considered. While the Portuguese and Spanish had longer experience of the issue due to their earlier voyages in the East Indies, there had been no concerted effort to find a solution. The lack of knowledge therefore greatly affected the lifespan of wooden shipping, making responses to it varied, and ultimately inconclusive. This paper considers the English experience of shipworm’s effects on wooden shipping during the 17th century,

and the traditional Chinese response, to question to possibility for regional knowledge to have provided a solution that could have led to longer ship life, and therefore less expense for the English Governor and Company of Merchants Trading to the East Indies (Company) owned vessels and the contracted private shipping often utilised.

Through examination of Company records and ships logs, the lifespan of shipping utilised in the region is compared with the Chinese experience, as recorded by European sailors. The differing technical responses are then compared, to consider the possibility for an earlier form of prevention to have been applied by English mariners utilising knowledge that was or could be known. The results show a Chinese vessel lifespan three times longer on average than English shipping, with a higher cost of maintenance, yet less issues experienced during voyages of the same duration. The conclusion is that Chinese methods of shipworm prevention were superior to those applied by English mariners, and that this was an issue Western nations never solved to the same level.

Biography

Mark Hoskin is a PhD Candidate at University of Greenwich. His research examines developments in Chinese maritime law, 1800-2016. Broader interests are the history of Southeast Asia, 1435-1950, involving the globalisation of trade and the resulting creation of maritime history.

MA, Taiwan Studies (SOAS).

HE Certificate, International Relations, Peace and Conflict (London Metropolitan University).

BEng (Mech), (Auckland Technical Institute, NZ)

12.00 – 13:30 Session Two: Naval History Chair Dr James Davey, University of Exeter

Jeremy Young

Forced to serve, a comparative study of the manning of the war fleets in France and Great-Britain.

Little research has considered comparing the manning systems utilised by the French and British navies during the 18th century. There is a tendency for historians to focus their attention on either the somewhat practical approach used by the Royal Navy or the more theoretical approach adopted by the French Navy. On the rare occasions where comparisons between the two system are performed, they tend to present the manning systems as contradictory. The main interest of this proposed paper will be to offer new insights into the effective correlation between the two systems. It will present how both systems worked and their influences upon each other. It will also compare how the two navies reacted when the official means of recruitment became insufficient, from the practical approach in Britain where ships would use sailors of colour, foreigners and even slaves and the theoretical approach of France to try and work within the class system. It will explain why both systems in the end failed and the impact it had on several key naval battles of the period. And finally it will highlight how both systems were closer in their actual outcomes than one may think originally. This paper will be composed with the results of my PhD dissertation that synthesises the French and British historiographies as well as archives and original sources in both languages.

Biography

Jeremy is a French-British historian who studied history as a Bachelor's degree and then a Master's degree at the University of Evry near Paris in France. During the second year of his Master's degree, he also studied for a bachelor's degree in Political Science at the Catholic Institute of Higher Education in Vendée before moving to the UK where he obtained a Master's degree in Diplomacy from the University of Nottingham and a Post Graduate Certificate in Education at the University of Southampton. After that degree he taught Modern Foreign Languages and History in Kent for a year. Back in France, he embarked on a doctorate in history, first at the University of Evry and then at the University of Southern Brittany, under the supervision of an acknowledged naval history specialist.

He obtained his Doctorate of History in December 2018. Since 2016. He has been a member of the Guadeloupe Historical Society where he published three articles: black sailors in the Royal Navy, black sailors in the French navy and the role of the war navies in enforcing the abolition of the slave trade. He has also contributed to several conferences at the University of the West Indies and the departmental archives of Guadeloupe.

Jayne Friend, (University of Portsmouth)

The Royal Navy, British culture, propaganda and opinion, 1939-1945

The cultural importance of the Royal Navy has long been a neglected topic by naval and cultural historians alike. However, the Royal Navy has played a large part in shaping British identity for hundreds of years with many naval customs, idioms and symbols now a part of everyday life and culture in Britain, but which the impact has rarely been fully investigated and understood. Only recently has there been scholarly interest in the social and cultural role of the navy within British popular culture which, as this paper will argue, served to shape the relationship between the navy and the nation. To this end, this paper examines representations of the navy in popular culture during the Second World War and considers the impact of ‘popular navalism’ through records of public opinion and contemporary attitudes. Specifically, this paper will explore the Mass Observation, commercial advertising, literature, live entertainment, art and film to argue that cultural experiences narrated the place of the modern Royal Navy in wartime society and the war at sea, and ‘appropriated’ the Navy as a symbol of stoicism and national character. The encroachment of naval culture into civilian entertainments was not a new phenomenon. Naval reviews and pageants portrayed sea power and naval culture within the civilian sphere, a phenomenon also seen in a wide range of other public spectacles and cultural pursuits. The Second World War provided the perfect catalyst for the exploitation of existing national affection for the navy and the potential of culture as naval propaganda.

Biography

Jayne is a PhD student at the University of Portsmouth, currently in her second year of my research project. Her research interests broadly encompass the social and cultural role of the Royal Navy in the Nineteenth and Twentieth centuries; with her PhD project investigating the navy destroyer as a symbolic ship in the shaping of naval and civilian identities, imperialism and navalism. Prior to beginning her doctorate, she completed a Masters degree with the Open university after retraining to pursue her interest in history. She currently works as a further education tutor after spending 10 years in the heritage sector.

Onianwa Oluchukwu Ignatus, University of Ibadan, Ibadan, Nigeria

British Royal Navy Training Team and Anglo-Nigerian Naval Training Agreement during the Nigerian Civil War, 1967-1970

This paper seeks to interrogate the invitation of the British Royal Navy Training Team to Nigeria during the Nigerian Civil War on voluntary bases and how it prompted the signing of the historic naval training agreement between Britain and Nigeria. As early as 1st July, 1967 in the wake of the imminent commencement of the Nigerian Civil War, the Nigerian Head of State, Major-General Yakubu Gowon, in an official letter sent to the British Prime Minister, Harold Wilson, had requested for essential military training personnel from Britain particularly the Royal Navy purposely to teach the Nigerian naval personnels on how to operate some military equipment ordered from Britain. On 21 July, 1967 the British High Commissioner to Nigeria, Sir David Hunt, following the discussion between the Permanent Secretary of the Nigerian Ministry of Defense, Obeya and British Defense Adviser in Lagos, Scott, confirmed that the British government had the capacity to train the Nigerian Navy to man various military equipment imported to the country, and that a crash training program

would be provided for them. Indeed, the British decision to allow the Royal Navy Training Team to Nigeria was part of the effort to strengthen the Nigerian Navy in the discharge of their duties during the war. The Naval Training Agreement was eventually signed on 26th June, 1969 between Major-General Yakubu Gowon and the British High Commissioner to Nigeria, Sir Leslie Glass. Significantly, the agreement strongly consolidated British influence in Nigeria amid Soviet Union's military and naval activities in the civil war.

Biography

Onianwa Oluchukwu Ignatus was born in Asaba, Delta State, Nigeria. He graduated with a Bachelor of Arts Degree from the Department of History and International Studies, Delta State University, Abraka, in 2008. In 2011, he proceeded to University of Ibadan, Ibadan where he obtained his Master of Arts Degree in History in 2013. His MA dissertation focused on the "Nigeria-Israeli Bilateral Relations, 1960-1992". He is currently a Doctoral candidate at the Department of History, University of Ibadan. He is working on a dissertation titled "Britain and Biafra's Propaganda during the Nigerian Civil War, 1967-1970", under the supervision of Professor Simon Ademola Ajayi. He is the author of the book titled "Britain's Injurious Peace Games in the Nigerian Civil War, 1967-1970" published by the Academica Press Washington DC United States of America and London. He is currently a member of three international Research Teams working on various book projects: first, "Visions of African Unity" sponsored by the International Study Group Netherlands based in the University of the Free State, Bloemfontein South Africa, secondly, "A Tight-Embrace: Euro-Africa Relations" with the Department of Political and Social Science, The University of Bologna, Italy and thirdly, "Captivity in War" in collaboration with the Swiss Military Academy ETH Zurich, Switzerland. He has attended so many conferences the most recent being the Midwest Conference on British Studies held on 14-16th September, 2018 at Hilton Embassy Suites, Lexington Green, Lexington, Kentucky United States of America where he delivered a paper titled "Helping the War Victims: British Women and the Nigerian Civil War, 1967-1970." His areas of specialization are Military History; War and Intelligence Studies; Air-power and Naval Studies; Nigerian civil war; Biafra's Propaganda, and British Diplomatic History

14:00 to 15:30 Session 3 Archaeology Chair: Professor Harry Bennett, University of Plymouth

Esther Bancroft, University of Bristol

Salvaging representational objects at sea

At the Battle of the Glorious First June, 1794, HMS *Brunswick* engaged with the French ship *Vengeur*. During the battle the figurehead's hat was shot away by enemy cannon-fire. As a result the ship's captain offered his own hat which was nailed onto the figurehead in an attempt to pacify the sailors who refused to continue with the figurehead so 'disfigured'. This story speaks of the importance of symbolic objects at sea.

The paper seeks to investigate the cultural resonance of figureheads, which are touchstones to the land. It will be argued that such representational objects are documents which are altered once salvaged from the sea. The paper will consider salvaging in two senses: the salvaging of meaning and the salvaging of physical objects from a trackless ocean. The opacity of the sea lends itself to the belief that it must be concealing something unknown; salvaged objects are thus fascinating because they have crossed the thalassic threshold.

Many academics have produced extensive research detailing the figureheads which remain in existence, but few have considered the significance of such symbolic objects as they appear in the waste of the ocean. Making use of the National Maritime Museum archive this paper explores the ways in which the cultural importance of figureheads has endured into the 21st century, offering a new perspective on a resonant part of English maritime history.

Biography

Esther is a recent graduate of the University of Bristol with a first-class degree in English (BA). Her interest in the maritime world began during research for a second-year unit entitled 'Literature and the Sea' which drew literary texts into conversation with scientific and historical journals. Her dissertation *The Third Place: William Golding's Vision of Purgatory* unpicked the ship-board space of nineteenth-century European vessels, drawing upon key critics such as Marcus Rediker and Greg Dening to explore how the sea, as a vast space devoid of stimuli, juxtaposes starkly with the demarcated space of the ship. Her exploration of oceanic purgatory was anchored within Golding's novel *Rites of Passage* (1980). She argued that sailors have their own system of 'sea-language' which creates a belief system at odds with the religion which manifests on Golding's vessel in the form of the Parson.

She worked at the National Maritime Museum as a research intern looking at representational objects at sea. Her emphasis was on figureheads but she was also interested in the symbolic weight of ship names. She hopes to produce a journal article which will be the foundation of the paper submitted to the research conference.

In September 2020 she began an English MA at the University of Bristol. Although the course is obviously literature based, her research has a maritime emphasis. This interdisciplinary approach to maritime research is an exciting way of creating new perspectives in the field.

Suzanne Marie Taylor, Birkbeck, University of London

A Little Ship with a big anniversary: Honouring M.L.286-Eothen, in the 80th Anniversary of Operation Dynamo.

WW1 submarine chaser-motor launch (M.L.)286, is a veteran of both the First and Second World Wars. Built for speed in 1916, this little "movy" began her adventurous life as a spirited submarine chaser as part of The Grey Patrol in WW1. During WW2, M.L.286 was one of the Dunkirk Little Ships, which took part in Operation Dynamo in 1940-by which time, she was renamed Eothen. In the 1980s, M.L.286-Eothen, was a houseboat until she was abandoned on the Thames foreshore at B J Wood & Son boatyard at Isleworth Ait, London-where she remains to this day, a hulked and stationary vessel. Yet is M.L.286 stationary? This paper will highlight how eighty years after M.L.286's involvement in Operation Dynamo, M.L.286 continues to be a Little Ship with a significant and heroic story to tell. This paper will explore M.L.286 as vibrant material culture which is constantly moving and evolving, while becoming a dynamic and engaging part of the boatyard landscape. This paper will highlight how M.L.286 continues to breathe new life through her dramatic history; archaeological remains; sold off parts recently discovered aboard another vessel; and through motor launch poetry and paintings. Therefore, this paper will explore the spirited biography of M.L.286 from an historical; archaeological; and artistic perspective, while honouring the memory of the heroic volunteers of the RNVR who served aboard M.L.286 and vessels of this type during the First World War, while also honouring the memory of the variety of people who bravely took part in Operation Dynamo.

Suzanne Taylor is originally from Vancouver, Canada. Suzanne recently completed her Master of Arts degree in Archaeological Practice at Birkbeck, University of London, and her research interests focus on engaging with archaeology through performance. Suzanne studied theatre in Canada and in London, UK, receiving her Postgraduate Diploma in Classical Acting from the London Academy of Performing Arts in 1997. In 2001, Suzanne became an actress and volunteer at the archaeological site of the 1587 Rose Playhouse, which prompted her desire to study archaeology in her quest to save the Rose, and which led to her being invited to St James's Palace in May 2014 to meet Their Royal Highnesses The Prince of Wales and The Duchess of Cornwall. In 2016 Suzanne became a volunteer with the Thames Discovery Programme joining the Foreshore Recording and Observation Group (FROG), which led to her active involvement with motor launch M.L.286 and subsequent research

about the vessel. In 2018, Suzanne became a volunteer at Fulham Palace, and for the Kenley Revival Project, performing in the staged reading of the memoirs of Lillias Barr-Assistant Section Officer of the Women's Auxiliary Air Force (WAAF). In 2018 Suzanne was nominated for the Mayor of London's "Unsung Heroic Women" special recognition award, and was awarded the "Rainbow FROG" award for the "FROG who helps out and brightens everyone's day" by the Thames Discovery Programme. Suzanne is an active member of the London Sea Shanty Collective, participating in the recent musical "The Earl de Grey: A Hull Folk Opera".

John Schofield, Independent

London's Waterfront 1100 to 1666

Some of the main findings for the period 1100–1666 from a group of excavations around the north end of medieval London Bridge in the City of London are summarised. A number of questions are explored: the main characteristics of this waterfront area in the medieval and Tudor periods, and what they say about the port of London within its European trading network; the sources of the pottery and artefacts incorporated into reclamation units, and any significance in their locations behind waterfront revetments or on foreshores; what the medieval and post-medieval artefacts tell us about specific aspects of culture, fashion and religious beliefs, and the potential for further research; the functions of the buildings and open areas, how they changed over time, to what extent this is illustrated by the pottery and artefacts, and to what extent each property and new development can be linked to specific owners or occupiers, as specified in the documentary record. The area south of Thames Street is assessed as an industrial suburb of the medieval City. The several thousand artefacts and several hundred kilos of English and foreign pottery, the latter now analysed into over 100 separate wares, deserve further study by scholars who can use the publication as the stepping stone into the archive held at the Museum of London. Thames Street was medieval London's gateway to the world; and research on medieval London's material culture can readily start on the waterfront.

Biography

John Schofield was an archaeologist at the Museum of London from 1974 to 2008. He has published several books about medieval London and medieval British towns.

16:00 to 17:30 Session 4 Fish and Ice Chair Professor David Starkey, University of Hull

Kunyan Zheng, Trinity College, Dublin

The Expanding English Encounters with Marine Atlantic World: Perceptions of Marine Fish in English Travel Accounts, c. 1560-1610.

The years roughly between 1560 and 1610 witnessed the gradual formation of English power in the marine Atlantic world. The mariners encountered diverse natural marine environments, some of which were linked with the waters harbouring abundant marine fish. The English also observed many different landscapes and marine fish species growing in the coastal areas on the other side of the Atlantic. Although some of the indigenous people in the newly discovered world held knowledge of the marine world and fish to some extent, little evidence has shown that there were efficient and significant exchanges of such knowledge between them and the English explorers, which was probably due to the lack of efficient communication tools and languages. Finally, fish were in a large part interpreted as both novel wealth and wonder in the travel accounts. Drawing on a huge number of English travel accounts about the westward voyages and discoveries in Richard Hakluyt's collection,

David B. Quinn's texts and Early Modern English Books Online (EEBO) database, this paper aims to reinterpret the entangled web of humans and nature in the Atlantic world between 1560 and 1610 via the lens of diverse English perceptions of marine fish and the marine world in the travel accounts from the perspective of environmental history.

Biography

Kunyan is a PhD student at the Trinity Centre for Environmental Humanities (TCEH), having joined in September 2019. She is working on the London fish market during the early modern period from the perspective of environmental history.

Kunyan completed a BA in History with a focus on modern Germany history, and another BA in Geography Science with a thesis on GIS at Central China Normal University in 2016. And then she obtained a MA in World History, concentrating on American environmental history at Renmin University of China in 2019.

Research Interests: environmental history, marine history, history of Western Europe, history of the American west, medical history.

Efstathia Dorovitsa, University of Hull

Tracing the Norwegian Ice Trade in North and Northwestern France 1870-1920: Reception, Controversies and The Politics of the Trade

During the long nineteenth century cargos of natural ice were shipped from Norway to numerous French ports. The history and evolution of this trade has so far been largely underrepresented in the literature, with only a few sparse references.

This paper, which forms part of a wider project titled 'The Last Ice Age', which will account for the multifaceted aspects of this long forgotten trade, will trace the course of the Norwegian ice trade in the French regions where it was mostly received, namely the North and Northwestern ports of France. Employing a diverse set of primary sources, from local Chambers of Commerce proceedings to specialized journals on refrigeration and Sanitary Police orders, this paper will argue that the trajectory of the Norwegian ice trade in France cannot be understood as a linear process, subject purely to laws of supply and demand. To fully grasp its dynamics and delineate its consumption and commercialization profile, other factors such as the role of geography in the success of the trade in a specific port should be considered. Furthermore, the trade should be viewed within the wider context of the hygienic ideas and policies in nineteenth century France as well as against the milieu of the newly introduced French artificial ice industry whose members were rigorously propagandizing against the imports of Norwegian ice blocks, often labelling them as catastrophic for the local economies and the French merchant fleets.

Biography

Effie Dorovitsa is a second year PhD student of Maritime History at the University of Hull and is based at the Blaydes Maritime Centre. Her research interests lie in the intersection of Maritime History with Cultural Studies and how they could inform one another. She has received her BA and MSc degrees in History from the University of Athens and the University of Edinburgh respectively. She has lectured in History and Ethnology in various Colleges and was also employed in secondary education as well as in the cultural/heritage sector.

Benjamin Jennings, University of Hull

Norwegian natural ice as a driver for modernisation in Britain 1822-1898

Natural ice was an object of fascination and desire among the gentry in Britain. The laborious process of collecting and storing ice in purpose-built ice houses became a seasonal activity for many stately homes. Although this supply proved adequate for many years, population movement toward urban areas and a burgeoning middle class increased the demand for ice beyond domestic supplies. Entrepreneurs exploited this demand by importing ice from outside of Britain; including the US, 'Greenland seas' and elsewhere in Europe. During the 1850's, Norwegian suppliers modernised their operations considerably, and were able to dominate the British market for natural ice. Although the business of marketing ice was an incredibly speculative, ice became increasingly available to the public. Ice chests became cheaper and were a fashionable yet useful element of the household. Norwegian natural ice could be found in ice creams sold on the street, drinks in luxurious establishments, the shop windows of butchers, and fish markets across the country. The development of the fisheries, particularly distant water trawling, went together with the development of the ice trade. Catches could be preserved for longer and brought to market in better condition, both reducing wastage and enabling the retail conditions for a large fresh fish market. Ice, used in the fisheries, was the crucial component which enabled a complete cold chain of supply. The exciting prospect of a technological solution to cooling was realized only late in the period. This period saw significant developments in cold air machines, vapour compression and ammonia compression cycles, use of refrigerants, insulators and cold storage design among other ideas. Ice imports continued to rise during its development and implementation phase. Natural ice was a driver for several cultural, technical, and social developments during this time which historians have yet to appreciate.

Biography

Benjamin Jennings is a PhD student based at Blaydes Maritime Centre, University of Hull. He came to the project through an interest in early-modern maritime history, following studies at Swansea University and Radboud University Nijmegen.

17:00 Closing Remarks: Professor Richard Harding, Vice Chairman, British Commission for Maritime History