

**S. 5. 2. – STEAM LINERS AND CRUISERS**

Chair: David Winkler  
(United States Naval Academy)

# *The Conditions for Establishing Steamship Lines in the Russian Baltic Provinces and Finland from 1837 to 1870*

TEELE SAAR (University of Tartu/Estonian Maritime Museum)

## **Abstract**

The transportation networks of the Russian Empire's Baltic provinces and the Grand Duchy of Finland differed from transport networks in other European provinces of the Empire because of their long coastline. On the one hand, the long coastline allowed the Baltic and Finnish regions to connect with one another, and on the other hand, it formed the gateway to Europe for the whole Empire. The main aim of my paper is to examine how the establishment of steamship lines and companies was organized and regulated in the Baltic provinces and the Grand Duchy of Finland. The paper focuses closely on the coastal steamship lines that connected the coastline that now forms present-day Estonia with other regions, as well as lines that connected the mainland with islands. The main network of coastal steamship lines was formed by the 1870s and this remained the same until World War I. In the 19th century, Russian economic policy fostered the development of certain economical fields like transport or industry by charing to the entrepreneurs the privileges or other benefits. In this paper, I will analyse the extent to which economic policy was orientated towards the encouragement of the establishment of passenger steamship traffic on the Baltic Sea.

## **Keywords**

steamship, Baltic Provinces, passenger, regulations, Finland

## **Biography**

PhD student at University of Tartu, Institute of History and Archeology.

Main field of reserch: Passenger Steamboat Traffic in Estonia before the First World War.

She had worked as researcher and collection holder at the Museum of Hiiumaa (2006–2011), and a researcher at the Estonian Maritime Museum (2011–2012 and 2016 until today).

She was the Head of the Research Department of the Estonian Maritime Museum in 2013–2016.

LEAR of the ARROWS project 2012–2015 In Estonian Maritime Museum (funded by EU).

## *From a journey to a voyage, the birth of Ocean cruises. The French Lines and the transformation of the Sea as a touristic destination*

FRANÇOIS DREMEAUX (University of Le Havre Normandie/University of Hong Kong)

### **Abstract**

Over a period of three quarters of a century, this paper aims at analysing a drastic change in the use of the Ocean: from a dreaded route to a cherished destination in itself. Tourism, a predominant social phenomenon of the 20th century, as well as leisure more generally, have transformed the human societies' relationship with the Sea along with the economic activities of shipping companies.

Thanks to unreleased archives, French shipping lines companies (mostly from Compagnie Générale Transatlantique and Messageries Maritimes) offer a relevant prism on these mutations and its different steps.

A necessary but often feared passage until the end of the 19th century, travels on liners became, during the first two decades of the following century, a social marker and a source of prestige. After the era of great migrations, especially transatlantic ones, the elites culturally seized this means of transport. Liners 'Ile-de-France' and 'Normandie' were pertinent examples.

The next stage was due to the combination of societal, economic and technical phenomena: development of mass tourism, mimicry between social classes, increased safety on board, cultural reconception of the sea, etc. It has transformed the view on the oceans and its use for leisure. After the 1940s, the liner, a means of transport supplanted by aviation, was no longer used to travel from point A to point B. It quickly became the destination itself: cruises were born.

In less than a century, the ocean has changed, from the passengers' point of view, from an uncertain place of transit to the very object of the presence on board. For decades, French companies were pioneers in more than one respect in this field; a page of history that could be illustrated from the liner 'France' (1912), nicknamed "Versailles of the Seas", symbol of a call to a new clientele, to the dashed hopes of 'France' (1962) and its cruises around the world and 'sea walks' in the West Indies, before it became 'Norway' in 1974.

**Keywords**

Tourism; Cruises; French Lines; Merchant Navy

**Biography**

Dr. François Drémeaux is a Research Engineer at the University of Le Havre Normandie (France) and a Visiting Assistant Professor at the University of Hong Kong. He also teaches at Sciences-Po Paris (Le Havre campus). He studied the evolution of the French community in Hong Kong before extending his work on French nationals abroad outside the imperial process. His research currently focuses on Social History of the Merchant Navies in Europe and he is leading a project on the Normans' networks in global maritime trade (1851-1974).

## *Seafarers on ocean liners during the transition from sail to steam: evidence from Belgium, 1850-1900*

KRISTOF LOOCKX (PhD)

### **Abstract**

The growth of shipping in the nineteenth century had widespread consequences for all aspects of the maritime industry. Most studies of the transition from sail to steam demonstrated that productivity growth and the increase in international trade was a result of technological change and declining freight rates. However, the impact of the transition from sail to steam on the nature of maritime labour has received less attention. Exploring this relationship can shed more light on the ways in which the composition of crews, quality of labour and nominal characteristics of seafarers were subject to change in a time when steam became a cost-efficient technology and replaced sail as the dominant mode of water transport. Based on the rich Antwerp seamen's registry, which recorded seafarers' individual careers on Belgian merchant vessels, Belgium serves a case study. Particular emphasis is put on transatlantic passenger travel, which was a crucial part of the unprecedented growth of shipping during the latter half of the nineteenth century. Although Belgium was a small maritime nation, it is an ideal case to examine the impact of the transition from sail to steam on maritime labour, particularly because the Belgian fleet almost exclusively consisted of sailing ships in the middle of the nineteenth century and steamships at the end of the century. Moreover, Belgian-flagged steamers played an important role in transporting thousands of Europeans to the Americas, which provides the opportunity to integrate the often neglected victualling department. The paper highlights how the emergence of steamships renewed the meaning of seamanship. This is linked to changing patterns in recruitment and the shipping industry's urge for more efficiency.

### **Keywords**

transatlantic ocean liners, maritime labour, Belgium, nineteenth century, from sail to steam

### **Biography**

Kristof Loockx is a PhD candidate at the University of Antwerp and the Vrije Universiteit Brussel in Belgium. He holds a Master's degree in History from the University of Ghent. His PhD dissertation examines the impact of the transition from sail to steam on seafarers' migration trajectories and careers on Belgian merchant vessels during the nineteenth century.