

## **Maritime Sociology: Polish and German Perspectives on a Sociology of Maritime Spaces**

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### **Description of the proposed Ad-Hoc-Group**

The topic of the sea and society is not new to sociology. Some of the founding fathers of sociology did research on specific maritime spaces. For instance in 1896, the German sociologist Ferdinand Tönnies analysed the working conditions and wages of different maritime professions as well as the major strike of 1896/97 in Hamburg (Tönnies, 1897a; Tönnies, 1897b). Today, Tönnies is regarded as the founder of maritime sociology (Fechner, 2010). But also for other classical sociologists maritime spaces were not unfamiliar. Norbert Elias was interested in studying the careers of naval professions (Elias, 1950) and intended to publish a book on that topic. Unfortunately, he did not finish his naval studies but some of his texts are available (Moelker and Mennell, 2007). Whereas maritime sociology is established in Anglo-Saxon, Scandinavian and East-European countries today there is no such sociological sub-discipline in Germany. Even though there are German sociological or ethnographic studies on maritime issues concentrating on industrial sociological research (Abendroth et al., 1979) and professional groups (Kube, 2013) all efforts to professionalize maritime sociology in Germany failed. In the 1980ies there was an attempt to institutionalize a working group called “maritime sociology” (*Arbeitsstelle Maritime Soziologie*; 1985-1992) at the institute of sociology at Kiel university. Its benefits were the support of master or doctorate qualification theses, lectures and the publication of the relevant bibliography (Prahla and Schack, 1992). This pioneering work was not continued after the disintermediation of the working group quite in contrast to the developments in Poland.

In Poland a totally different development can be observed. Polish sociological studies on maritime issues go back at least to the interwar period; however these early publications lacked empirical studies. The proper research associated with maritime sociology perspective started after the Second World War when Poland acquired greater access to sea and maritime industry was to become an indispensable part of a recovering economy. Poznań, Gdańsk and Szczecin became major academic centres of maritime sociology (*socjologia morska*). The term for a new sociological sub-discipline was coined by Aleksander Matejko (1964) and Ludwik Janiszewski, who published an introductory article devoted to it in 1994. Between 1950ies and 1990ies the scientific research on the relations between man and sea was thriving. It included numerous projects and studies on marine professions, trade and fishing vessels crews, seamen's and fishermen's families, port cities, organization and management in maritime industry companies, seaside local communities, often published in the scientific journal 'Annals of Marine Sociology' issued by Polish Academy of Sciences in Gdańsk and Szczecin. After years of lower interest in maritime sociology parallel to the decline of maritime industry during the years of Polish transformation one may observe its revival now. Polish sociologists introduced the sessions of maritime sociology to the European Sociological Association conferences (Lisbon 2009, Geneva 2011 and Torino 2013) as well as to their national sociological congress (Szczecin 2013).

In general, there are many reasons to focus research on maritime spaces. Maritime spaces include oceans as well as coastal areas, spaces which are at risk nowadays. Ecological crises (overfishing, decline in biodiversity, climate change, eutrophication, ocean pollution), economic crises (de-industrialization, whaling moratorium, structural change, development of alternative industries) and cultural crises (destabilization of collective identities of seaside and island inhabitants, cultural practices of sharing, inhabitants' knowledge, local traditions, transformations of maritime professions) cumulate in these maritime spaces. So far research on maritime issues is dominated by natural science disciplines. The protection of maritime natural sources and the need for sustainable development demands research on the 'human factor' and a sociological perspective on maritime spaces.

This ad-hoc group is the first attempt to refresh activities of maritime sociology in Germany and to start a Polish-German dialogue on maritime issues bringing together scholars from sociology to begin a discussion on the interrelations between society and the sea. The aim of this dialogue is the exchange of theoretical perspectives on maritime spaces in a historical perspective (from the founding fathers of sociology to the concept of marinization) and the presentation of fields of empirical research (sustainability on the high seas, innovators in aquaculture, seaside local communities in crisis, construction of collective community identity) including a variety of sociological methods (discourse analysis, grounded theory, qualitative interviews, ethnography). We would like to discuss how sociology is approaching the subject of maritime spaces, what kind of strengths and weaknesses is associated with such a perspective of maritime sociology and whether a "maritime sociology" should have a future as a sociological approach.

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## **Paper Presentations**

### **A Short Introductory Note on Maritime Sociology**

Dr. Frank Sowa	Institute for Employment Research (IAB)
Dr. habil. Agnieszka Kołodziej	University of Szczecin

### **The Founding Fathers of Sociology on Maritime Social Issues**

Robert Bartłomiejski	University of Szczecin
Dr. Maciej Kowalewski	University of Szczecin

### **The Concept of Marinization – Research Areas of Szczecin Maritime Sociologists**

Dr. habil. Agnieszka Kołodziej	University of Szczecin
Dr. Arkadiusz Kołodziej	University of Szczecin

### **Understanding Sustainability on the High Seas. Discourses of Sustainability**

Dr. Ulrike Kronfeld-Goharani	Kiel University
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### **Being Deviant in the Blue Growth – A Sociological Approach of Innovators in Aquaculture**

Dr. Tobias Lasner	Thünen Institute of Fisheries Ecology
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### **Crisis of Seaside Local Communities – the Example of Szczecin**

Dr. Żaneta Stasieniuk	University of Szczecin
Dr. Urszula Kozłowska	University of Szczecin

### **Seaside Communities in Crisis: On the Construction of Collective Identity in a Japanese Whaling Town after the Moratorium**

Dr. Frank Sowa	Institute for Employment Research (IAB)
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## **Abstracts**

Robert Bartłomiejski/Dr. Maciej Kowalewski (University of Szczecin)

### **The Founding Fathers of Sociology on Maritime Social Issues**

In this presentation we will revise a fairly widespread opinion that classical sociology had extensively focused on basic research industries, particularly mining and metallurgy, neglecting at the same time studies on fishermen, seafarers and other spheres of human activities at sea. The aim of the paper is to present a contribution of founding fathers of sociology to maritime sociology and to criticize the misconception that maritime sociology is a secondary or minor area for social research. The presentation will give examples of less known theoretical concepts and remarks of classical sociologists (among others Karl Marx, Max Weber, Ferdinand Tönnies, Georg Simmel) concerning maritime socio-professional categories (i.e. dockers, shipyard workers, seamen, fishermen).

Dr. Arkadiusz Kołodziej/Dr. habil. Agnieszka Kołodziej-Durnaś (University of Szczecin)

### **The Concept of Marinization - Research Areas of Szczecin Maritime Sociologists**

At least since 1960ies Polish sociologists have pursued empirical projects where 'the maritime factor' played the main role. One of the founders of maritime sociology Ludwik Janiszewski published the outline of the theory of marinization in 1994 in order to generalize the results of research. The 'maritime factor' is the central category of the theory of marinization – it means bio-physical system of sea environment that influences all the spheres of social life, determines and orders various forms of human activity. He imagined that marinization is in some sense similar to the processes of industrialization and urbanization. The mechanisms of marinization include these associated with: maritime institutions, social diversity (triggered by maritime institutions), level of maritime consciousness, adaptation to roles of sea professions, professional differentiation in seaside local communities, differentiation of individual and local needs under the influence of maritime economy. The marinization as a social process is told to influence the physical and psychological shape of an individual, the economic activity of seaside local communities, their demographic characteristics, constitute the patterns, norms, value systems and life styles of seaside areas inhabitants.

Dr. Ulrike Kronfeld-Goharani (Kiel University)

### **Understanding Sustainability on the High Seas. Discourses of Sustainability**

The oceans form the world's largest ecosystem providing humankind with a multitude of services. For decades the oceans were assumed to be limitless sources for food, energy, minerals, transportation and recreation and seemed to be invulnerable to human-caused pollution due to its sheer size and dilution effects. 64 per cent of the high seas are not subjected to national sovereignty thus being an open access source to anyone who has the means. Having taken oceans' services for granted and ignoring that a productive and healthy ocean is essential for wealth and well-being of the present and future generations, the large marine ecosystem is close to collapsing due to overfishing, pollution, eutrophication and effects of climate change. To secure the 'blue wealth' there is an increasing need to develop a more sustainable dealing with and a sustainable stewardship for the oceans. But what does 'sustainability' mean for the ocean, whose contribution to wealth and development is still not properly acknowledged nor even quantified? Though the term has received much international attention since its classical definition provided by the Brundtland Commission in 1987 there is still no common definition and the term is of little specificity. In particular, the large

uncertainties with regard to the future ocean and ocean change challenge simple concepts of sustainability. Based on the theoretical framework provided by the poststructuralist approach of Ernesto Laclau and Chantal Mouffe this study covers the last ten years after the World Summit in a diachronic analysis of documents. In a first step, the aim is to look at how the sustainability concept has been developing in maritime affairs since then. Currently, the study is based on a corpus of 2576 texts that consists of natural scientific publications, official documentations, statements and speeches of important stakeholders in ocean affairs. Applying the method of corpus linguistics a statistical analysis has been done to analyse frequency as well as typical connotations of dominant signifiers, e.g. sustainability.

Dr. Tobias Lasner (Thünen Institute of Fisheries Ecology, Hamburg)

### **Being Deviant in the Blue Growth: A Sociological Approach of Innovators in Aquaculture**

Fisheries and aquacultures provide people livelihoods in rural and coastal societies all over the world. Fish, mussels, crabs and seaweed are captured in wild seas, lakes, and rivers or farmed in ponds, raceways, and cage cultures. To the statistics of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations almost 55 million people work in fisheries and aquacultures, do not consider all the processors, fishmongers and sub-suppliers, who are directly or indirectly engaged in the fishery sector. Nowadays, the fisheries sector faces many challenges: Overfishing endangers biodiversity and the natural regeneration capacity of marine resources, inequality occurs in case of the distribution of fishing permissions and technologies between the “rich north” and “poor south”, skyrocketing growth of aquaculture (Blue Growth) can lead to high environmental risks. All these dynamics accompany social changes for fishers, fish farmers in particular and rural and coastal communities in general. Notwithstanding, sociological approaches have rarely been applied in European fishery research. The presentation will give an example for social sciences in fishery research. Therefore, a qualitative case study using Grounded Theory about the adoption of innovations in aquaculture to overcoming the abovementioned challenges will be presented. The presentation argues that there is a need for social science approaches to understand patterns of motivation among the protagonists in fisheries and aquaculture, in order to develop a sustainable and acceptable fisheries management policy.

Dr. Żaneta Stasieniuk/Dr. Urszula Kozłowska (University of Szczecin)

### **Crisis of Seaside Local Communities - the Example of Szczecin**

Seaside local community is an integral part of wider territorial communities and a specific type of a community with distinctive features like: its inhabitants live in seaside areas or area at a marine lagoon and therefore maritime industry in a considerable way influences their professional activity. The location also influences the character and conditions of existence of people inhabiting the seaside area. In the paper the concept of seaside local communities is presented and the distinctive features of a port city are discussed. Geographical, economic, political, social, historical and administrative factors having their impact on the development of Szczecin are elaborated on. The process of Poland's integration within the EU in the context of maritime and regional policies was analysed. It is pointed out that contemporary the process of globalization and the current global crisis influence in a significant way the development of seaside local communities. This results in major transformations both in the economic and social-cultural situation of Szczecin.

Dr. Frank Sowa (Institute for Employment Research, Nuremberg)

**Seaside Communities in Crisis: On the Construction of Collective Identity in a Japanese Whaling Town after the Moratorium**

After the whaling moratorium of the International Whaling Commission (IWC) came into force in 1986, Japanese whaling activities such as small-type coastal whaling, scientific whaling in the Antarctic, driving whaling or hand-harpooning continued on a reduced level. The zero-catch moratorium had an enormous impact on the whalers, the whaler's families and the traditional whaling towns. Being located in very remote rural areas, seaside communities found themselves involved in crisis concerning the economic, cultural, spiritual, social and moral development. Results of the ethnographic fieldwork conducted in a contemporary whaling town in Japan show that whaling is still a part of the collective memory of the town: whalers and non-whalers construct their identities through the articulation of a strong attachment to the traditional whaling town and their ancestors. From the very beginning whaling was an industry including economic activities but it was so dominant ("whales are my life") that all inhabitants were involved in whaling related activities (sharing, arts and crafts). Today, whaling activities on the sea and on the land are decreasing. Additionally, whale and whaling symbolization is increasing. Inhabitants of the community experienced pressure from anti-whaling campaigns performed by global environmental groups and animal welfare organizations. Due to these experiences a new community identity emerged including whaling as a reflected articulation, a marker of a cultural boundary in relation to Euro-Americans, but also in relation to urban Japanese and other rural communities which are not whaling, securing the future of the town as whaling town.