Archaeology and History of Medieval and Early Modern Cargo Ships in the Baltic Sea

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Session Description

In this session, we invite you to present and discuss archaeological finds of medieval and early modern trade ships including aspects of their trade. In recent years, many new and important finds of cargo ships have been made in the waters of the Baltic Sea and even on land. What can these archaeological finds tell of the international and regional contacts? The origins of large-scale trade in the Baltic Sea can be traced to the Viking age and developed further in the following Hanseatic period. What about the regional trade and traffic conducted between the Baltic countries? How did trade between the north and south Baltic and regions outside Baltic Sea operate? What kinds of ships travelled between the lands in the Baltic Sea and further to countries outside the region? We hope to discuss the ships and trade from regional to supra-regional and international aspects with the understanding that trade consisted of various networks in many levels. Here, research questions on dendrochronological research of shipwrecks are also relevant. We are familiar with the historical accounts of the "Mother trade" between the east and west in the Baltic Sea, but how well do we know the fluyts and other ships, which generated this wealth?

How is the international and regional trade reflected in the archaeological finds in cargo ships? Does the image concur with what we know from historical sources? In addition to physical archaeological finds, we would also like to discuss the infrastructure around medieval and early modern trade in the Baltic Sea, its networks, actors and even the routes where trade took place.

Keywords

Trade; Shipbuilding; Shipwrecks; Networks