
Announcement published by David Wilson on Thursday, January 13, 2022
Type: Call for Papers
Date: January 28, 2022
Subject Fields: African History / Studies, Maritime History / Studies, Law and Legal History, Atlantic History / Studies, Colonial and Post-Colonial History / Studies

Call for Papers

Charting African Waterscapes: A Conference on African Maritime History Across Time and Space

28-29 March 2022, Online Conference

African maritime history has blossomed since the time that Jean-Pierre Chauveau (1986) posed the question “Is an African Maritime History Possible?” Today, there is a rich scholarship of African maritime history to be found across studies on diverse issues including maritime labour, port towns, fisheries, whaling, marine ecology, colonialism of marine spaces and resources, spiritual beliefs and water deities, global maritime trading networks, and the transoceanic slave trade. Whether it is the Atlantic, Mediterranean, or Indian Oceans, it is impossible to understand the histories of these oceanic worlds and their global connections without recognising the role of Africans and African communities in shaping them. Yet, as Carina E. Ray and Jeremy Rich emphasised in 2009, African maritime history is still a relatively new field despite the fact that “no one doubts that seas and rivers were crucial links between Africa and the rest of the world”.

Taking place in March 2022 during the International Year of Artisanal Fisheries and Aquaculture, this conference will explore the burgeoning field of African maritime history and its study across various chronological, geographical, and thematic barriers. It aims to bring together scholars working on any aspect of African
**maritime history.** Drawing from Kevin Dawson’s (2018) *waterscapes*, this includes saltwater and freshwater contexts, steering across rivers and lakes within the African continent and along the coasts and estuaries of the Atlantic, Mediterranean, and Indian Oceans, and beyond to the watery expanses throughout the globe where African and African-descended peoples navigated.

This online conference will occur across **two half-day sessions** from **28-29 March 2022**. Once a prospective programme of papers has been compiled, the time of each half-day session will be confirmed in order to best accommodate all participating speakers. The half-day sessions will include formal panels and a keynote address while also incorporating time for (optional) informal discussions in the form of breaks between panels.

Possible themes, are not limited to, but include:

- Maritime laws, customs, and governance
- Fisheries and other marine enterprise
- Maritime labour
- Colonialism of marine spaces and resources
- Maritime communities and port towns
- Aquatic cultures
- Gender and marine spaces
- Ecological knowledge and conservation

Proposals are welcomed for both individual papers of twenty minutes and three-paper panels that discuss any aspect of African maritime history.

**Abstracts of 250 words along with a short biographical note** should be sent to **David Wilson** at david.wilson.101@strath.ac.uk by **28 January 2022**

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