

# **pomorski zbornik**

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## **Editor's foreword – chief editor of the *Journal of maritime and transportation sciences***

Dear readers, associates, and friends of maritime affairs and transport,  
This special edition of the *Journal of Maritime and Transportation Sciences*, containing papers from the first Croatian conference on the preservation and revitalization of maritime heritage, contributes to the sixty-three-year tradition and reputation of this scientific and professional publication.

The Association of Societies for the Study and Advancement of Maritime Affairs was founded on 9 September 1962 in Split, with the mission of studying and improving maritime affairs. Its first headquarters was in Zadar, but it soon moved to Rijeka, where it remains to this day.

The Presidency was composed of distinguished scientists and – following the custom of the time – politicians and admirals. Presidents of the Association and editors of the *Journal of Maritime and Transportation Sciences* included the academician Grga Novak, Professor Vjekoslav Maštrović, academician Vladislav Brajković, and others.

The Association was supported by a significant administrative infrastructure and, in addition to its main secretariat in Rijeka, had branches in Piran, Zadar, Šibenik, Split, Dubrovnik, Kotor, and Zagreb. It organized thematic professional and scientific conferences, publishing the presented papers, as well as scientific and professional articles, in the *Journal of Maritime and Transportation Sciences*. Over the decades, it has actively promoted maritime affairs and kept alive the idea of Croatia's "Adriatic orientation".

Since April 2015, the Association has operated under the name *Association for the Study and Development of Maritime Affairs*. Its main activity, both in the past and today, is the publication of the *Journal of Maritime and Transportation Sciences*, which has been continuously published for 63 years.

The thousands of pages printed over these six decades, written by eminent contributors, bear witness to the development of Croatian maritime science and confirm the value of the Croatian maritime tradition. Since its inception, the *Journal of Maritime and Transportation Sciences* has published scientific and professional papers covering topics from Croatian illustrious maritime past – from antiquity, through the era of the Dubrovnik Republic, and into more recent times, particularly the expansion of Croatian maritime affairs and shipping in the 1970s. By nurturing Adriatic maritime historical heritage and encouraging the interplay between scientific theory and practice, the Journal has worked toward affirming Croatian maritime orientation and developing Croatia as a maritime nation. With 70 volumes, the *Journal of Maritime and Transportation Sciences*

stands as an indispensable professional and cultural maritime asset and represents one of the core values of Croatian maritime thought and tradition.

I am especially pleased that we have established cooperation with the organizers of the conference on the preservation and revitalization of maritime heritage, and that through this special edition, we have enabled the publication of articles that testify to the importance of these topics for the safeguarding of our maritime tradition and heritage.

Dear collaborators, scientists, and experts, your manuscripts, articles, ideas, and research findings are an investment in the future. Through your intellectual contributions, we collectively promote our maritime domain.

I would like to thank the guest editors and colleagues Tea Perinčić, Jakov Karmelić, and Robert Mohović, and I look forward to further collaboration on future conferences dedicated to the preservation and revitalization of maritime heritage.

Chief Editor of the Maritime Journal  
*Siniša Vilke*

## Foreword – Guest editors

On the occasion of the 15th anniversary of the inaugural public presentation on the systematic approach to the preservation and revitalization of maritime heritage in Kvarner and Istria, as well as the 10th anniversary of the work and activities of the Coordination of Associations for the Preservation and Revitalization of the Maritime, Fishing and Shipbuilding Heritage of Kvarner and Istria, the first Croatian conference on the topic of the preservation and revitalization of the overall maritime heritage was held in Rijeka on 12 and 13 September 2024. The event took place in the Marble Hall of the Maritime and History Museum of the Croatian Littoral Rijeka.

The main organizers were the Coordination of Associations for the Preservation and Revitalization of the Maritime, Fishing and Shipbuilding Heritage of Kvarner and Istria and the Maritime and History Museum of the Croatian Littoral Rijeka. They partnered with the Primorje-Gorski Kotar County, the Kvarner Tourist Board, the Tourist Board of the City of Rijeka, the Faculty of Maritime Studies of the University of Rijeka, and the Section for Croatian Maritime Heritage of the Scientific Council for Maritime Studies of the Croatian Academy of Sciences and Arts.

Beyond marking these anniversaries, the primary goals of the conference were to present maritime heritage preservation and revitalization projects from across Croatia, exchange experiences on achieved results, foster cooperation in the preservation, revitalization, and communication of maritime heritage, and facilitate a final discussion on the future of maritime heritage preservation and revitalization in Croatia.

The conference participants included employees of maritime museums, maritime heritage interpretation centers, tourist boards, representatives of the Ministry of Culture and Media of the Republic of Croatia, Primorje-Gorski Kotar County and the Conservation Institute in Rijeka, and others interested in the topic of maritime heritage preservation and revitalization.

The opening presentations addressed themes such as the vision for maritime heritage preservation and revitalization, the recognition and preservation of intangible maritime heritage, results of EU-funded projects (Mala Barka, Mala Barka 2, Arca Adriatica and AdriProm Tour) and viewing maritime heritage as a tourism resource.

On the first day, the conference featured presentations from maritime heritage interpretation centers from Istria and the Croatian Littoral, including locations in Rovinj, Mošćenička Draga, Lovran, Crikvenica, Jadranovo, Krk, Mali Lošinj, Malinska, Kostrena, Lopar, Rab, Kraljevica, Bakar, Selce, Klenovica and Cres.

The second day focused on maritime museums and museums with maritime collections (Betina, Split, Zadar, Veli Lošinj, Umag, Vrbovska), as well as maritime heritage

interpretation centers from Milna, Sumartin, Novigrad and Biograd. The final segment highlighted maritime festivals and best practices in the preservation and revitalization of maritime heritage through the activities of associations (from Murter, Betina, Komiža and Split).

All conference participants presented their visions and project outcomes, discussing how artifacts are presented, their unique features and challenges, ways in which they are trying to solve them, relationships with founders, staff sizes, funding sources, and cooperation with local communities.

All the presentations were very interesting, indicating that all participants were united by a great passion, love and enthusiasm for this part of our heritage. Life by and from the sea has profoundly shaped the identity of coastal and island communities, which has been passed down through generations. The conference showed the diverse ways in which maritime heritage is interpreted and valued. Examples of numerous interpretation centers included the House of the Sea interpretation center in Mošćenička Draga, established as a pilot project of maritime heritage interpretation centers in Kvarner as part of the *Mala barka* project, and the interpretation center in Krk which presented the collection of Željko Skomeršić, a ship modeler with a workshop in the town center, where his skills in making models can be directly observed. Unique examples also featured a navigational interpretation center of maritime heritage of the island of Lošinj on the Lošinj lugger Nerezinac and the virtual museum of fishing, maritime affairs and shipbuilding of the town of Rab called Juxta Mare. This virtual museum spans 13 information boards along the promenade from Banjole to Barbat. These boards incorporate QR codes, which enable a bird's-eye view of the entire path with all points on a smartphone and access to each point separately, exploring the content. It also features an AR button on the screen that connects the mobile device with three-dimensional objects in digital format, which appear in a live image on the screen and are seemingly projected into the space in front of the device, creating augmented reality. The Rovinj Ecomuseum – Casa della batana – centers its program on the promoting batana building and all the related cultural elements associated with it, including traditional fishing, the unique musical style bitinada, the Istriot language, gastronomy, maritime customs and ceremonies, sailing with mainsails, and many more. Due to all its activities and results, this ecomuseum has been included in the UNESCO Register of Best Practices for the Preservation of Intangible Cultural Heritage. Other notable centers include the Lovran Guc Interpretation Center in Lovran, focusing on the traditional Lovran guc and local traditional shipbuilding, and the Five Dollar Interpretation Center in Sumartin, dedicated to the inventor Mario Puratić. In Betina, a floating collection of traditional boats was presented in the open air, while the Crikvenica City Museum is dedicated to maritime heritage through its exhibitions. The Maritime and History Museum of the Croatian Littoral in Rijeka coordinated the creation of an online database of maritime heritage, used to create the virtual sea museum Mala Barka and Arca Adriatica, which covers a wide area from the Slovenian Littoral, through Istria to



Kvarner. The valuable role of interpretation centers in small island and coastal towns, often established in previously dilapidated and unused areas, and how these centers become hubs of research, preservation of other heritage values, and a driving force of cultural tourism, was duly noted.

The discussion aimed to address the future of maritime heritage preservation and revitalization, highlighting the challenges in financing and establishing a legal framework for the commercialization of activities after the completion of EU projects (e.g. charging for tickets and souvenirs, tourist transport in traditional boats). The discussion also underlined the issue related to inadequate planning, where exhibition content is adapted to a predefined space, and emphasized the importance of collaboration between architects, designers and curators, as their partnership significantly influences the quality of the exhibition. The relationship between museological activities and the promotion of maritime heritage through a tourism product was also explored. The need for authentic restoration of traditional boats and their equipment was emphasized, along with the importance of continuously transferring knowledge and skills in boat restoration and the art of navigation and sailing to younger generations. Incentives like preferential conditions for communal mooring and small port fees could serve as strong motivators for restoring traditional boats.

Although some of the invited speakers were unable to participate in the conference, and some contributions could not be included in this edition of the Proceedings, the conference demonstrated that recent projects for the preservation and valorization of maritime heritage have impacted numerous coastal and island towns. Moreover, the Conference provided a valuable platform for fostering connections, encouraging the exchange of experiences, strengthening networks, and creating a forum for joint action involving the public, local governments, tourist boards and state administration bodies, who can provide support for realizing future visions and goals in the preservation and revitalization of maritime, fishing and traditional shipbuilding heritage.

All submitted papers were edited and peer-reviewed as conference papers and included in the conference proceedings, organized into thematic sections: From theory to practice in the preservation and interpretation of maritime heritage, Examples of good practice in the interpretation of maritime heritage, Maritime museums and museums with maritime collections, and Festivals and other good practices in the preservation and revitalization of maritime heritage.

It was agreed that the host of the next, second conference dedicated to the preservation and revitalization of maritime heritage will be the Betina Museum of Wooden Shipbuilding located in Betina on the island of Murter. We look forward to the next meeting wishing for favorable winds on our journey in maritime heritage.

Guest editors – Tea Perinčić, Jakov Karmelić, Robert Mohović



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