Havtidsseminarium 09.11.2022

Tori Falck

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Working title: Tradition, innovation and pragmatism. Social perspectives on the driving forces behind changes in maritime technology in Viken (AD1050-1700).

The seminar will be presented in English. The thesis is written as a monograph.

At the seminar I will present the present state of my project. The working title is still the same as it was in my project description, and even if it is not so creative, it explains the substance of what I want to do in my thesis.

Some initial questions I have been working with are:

- Do technical variabilities in shipbuilding reflect **societal changes** in the medieval and early modern period?
- Do technical variabilities (traditions) in shipbuilding reflect **social aspects** of the work/practices?
- Can technical variabilities in shipbuilding be used to interpret how different building traditions have **influenced** each other?
- How can these question be discussed **theoretically**, from a perspective on **craft practices**?

A goal of my project is to connect the ship building techniques in southern Norway and western Sweden in one analysis. This will be done by using a statistical method developed by Jan Bill, where he uses Multiple Correspondence Analysis (MCA) to systematise a large find corpus with many variables. This way the finds from the Danish area (Bill 2009), and the Norwegian/Swedish area will be comparable. I find that the MCA provides a method that makes it possible to discuss the initial questions asked, via a rigorous and systematic organisation of a complex material. It is a method that *thinks in relations*, to use Bourdieu's words.

Up till now I have systematised all the material from Norway (96 finds, absence and presence of 60 properties) and made a test run of it in the statistical software R. Now I am also finishing the collecting and systematising of the Swedish material and will make a final run of the data in spring 2023.

The statistical test run has made me identify patterns that facilitates further reasoning and opens new questions. I find the statistics useful to "think with". It must be added that the results also reveal disorder and effects that are not easily understood. The most important result of the analysis at this point is its assistance in choosing specific examples of craft practices that I believe are relevant to discuss the initial questions. The cases in my thesis will be chosen primarily based on *practices*, not dating, provenance or site. I will present some of the cases in the seminar.

This autumn I have been working on the theoretical perspectives that are important to illuminate the changes and continuities in the material. I have found much inspiration in literature that discusses material culture from a craft perspective, and that takes up concepts concerning the learning and transfer

of practical skills, communities of practice, and the negotiation of meaning through craft performances. As Dobres (2000) puts it, archaeology needs to investigate the more "messy social side" of technology.

I will be very grateful for comments both on my methodological choices and on theoretical implications.

References:

Bill, Jan. 2009. 'From Nordic to North European. Application of Multiple Correspondence Analysis in the Study of Changes in Danish Shipbuilding A.D. 900-1600.' Pp. 429–38 in Between the Seas. Transfers and Exchange in Nautical Archaeology., edited by R. Bockius. Mainz: Verlag des Römisch-Germanischen Zentralmuseums.

Dobres, Marcia-Anne. 2000. Technology and Social Agency. Outlining a Practice Framework for Archaeology. Oxford and Malden: Blackwell Publishers.