

**Call for papers**  
**The resilience of European port cities : crisis and reinvention (XVI<sup>th</sup>-XXI<sup>th</sup>)**  
**17 and 18 May 2018**  
Université du Littoral-Côte d'Opale (ULCO)  
Dunkirk (France)

**Deadline for proposal: 15 december 2017**

Port cities have often radically reinvented themselves, a testament to their resiliency (i.e. their capacity of resistance and their ability to recover from disruptive events). Port cities have withstood major disruption such as wars, natural disasters, political revolutions, technological innovation, and globalisation. Such occurrences have considerably altered their identities, from the protective military arsenals of the past to the modern metropolis. Port cities are both an interface between communities and the sea, and also residing at the crossroads of broader dynamics.

Many different types of change have affected port cities, not least in terms of culture and imagination. Harbours have sometimes been associated with adventure and openness towards the outer world, but also with illicit activities. Economic, social and political changes have been tremendously important. Port cities have radically changed their main activities: from military to civilian activities, from colonial to global trade, from transportation hubs to production facilities, and from industrial ports to historical sites. Port infrastructures have been moved to the periphery while old buildings in the center have been refurbished, and in doing so considerably reinvented a city's identity and functions.

The question of the resilience of port cities, of their crises and reinvention, is linked to three considerations:

- The port city in its national and global environment. Harbours have perpetually reorganized their relationships with their hinterland and with other harbours. Such developments are interlinked with public policies, such as regional policy, both at the national and at the European level. Consequently, the identities - but also the relationship with globalisation of those port cities - have sometimes been radically transformed: some cities which were on the margins are becoming new hubs, while the reverse trend is also visible.
- The transformation of the urban landscape and society. The city is defined by its creation but also by its reinvention. This sometimes involved a period of transition marked by crisis which left deep scars in terms of social, demographic, economic or urban developments.
- «Crisis as a legacy». After economic and social crises, port cities have reinvented their landscape, their economic activities, as well as their identities and, consequently, their political orientation. Is the past considered a burden or an opportunity to reinvent the city? Does resilience require erasing part of the past, such as the collective memory of the working class (stevedore, sailors, seamen, shipbuilders) devastated by neoliberal globalisation, or is it compatible with the reinvention of strong local maritime identities?

Call for papers

The conference will take place over a day and a half, with discussions in French and in English. A bilingual publication in an edited volume is planned for the selected papers.

Local costs will be covered (accommodation, meals). Depending on the funding available, a contribution to transportation costs might be considered for those who do not benefit from a refund from their university.

The conference organizers place an emphasis on papers dealing with crises and reinvention in a comparative fashion. It is open to historians and to other social scientists who adopt a historical

viewpoint, in particular geographers, specialists of areas studies, sociologists, urbanists, anthropologists, and researchers employed in museums and archival centers.

Please send your proposal (ca. 3000 characters / 500 words) with a short biographical note before 15 December 2017 at : colloquedunkerque2018@gmail.com

### A multi-year programme

This conference is embedded within different research frameworks. First, it embodies the vibrant expertise in maritime history of the *Centre de Recherche en Histoire Atlantique et Littorale* (CRHAEL-HLLI) from the University of Littoral-Côte d'Opale (Boulogne-sur-mer, Calais, Dunkirk), in association with the GIS d'Histoire & Sciences de la Mer (Scientific Interest Group of Maritim History and Science of the Sea).

In addition, it is the second event of the program "resilience of port cities" supported by the research network PORTHIFE (Ports, Hinterlands, Intermodalité, Frontières, Environnement) which gathers several universities of Northern France and of Belgium (U. du Littoral-Côte d'Opale, U. d'Artois, U. de Lille-SHS, UCL, Louvain-la-Neuve). It follows the first conference organized in Arras in June 2017 by Jean-François Grevet which focused on the question of intermodality, and on the relationships between ports cities, hinterlands, waterway and inland ports.

Lastly, this conference is part of the larger research project EHNE ("Ecrire une nouvelle histoire de l'Europe" / « Writing a New History of Europe ») supported by the Paris-based Labex EHNE. This conference aims at renewing the history of Europe by conducting a multi-level analysis of the interaction of actors (from the local to the global level) in many different settings, from the study of public policies to the question of identities. The conference also puts an emphasis on the question of comparativism at the European scale.

Organisation and scientific coordination : Christian Borde (Ulco-Hlli-Crhael), Jean-François Grevet (ESPE-LNF/CREHS), Sébastien Martin (Ulco-Hlli-Crhael), Laurent Warlouzet (Ulco-Hlli-Crhael).

Scientific Committee : Gilbert Buti (University of Aix-Marseille, Telemme), Olivier Dard (University Paris-Sorbonne, Sirice, Labex Ehne), Stéphane Durand (EHESS, Centre Norbert Elias) Caroline Le Mao (University of Bordeaux 3, Cemmc), Luca Lo Basso (University of Genoa, Italy), Bruno Marnot (University of La Rochelle, Crhia, Labex Ehne), Amelia Polonia (University of Porto, Portugal), Christoph Strupp (Research Centre for Contemporary History in Hamburg, Germany), Pierre Tilly (University Catholique de Louvain-UCL, Belgium), Béatrice Touchelay (University Lille-Shs, Irhis).