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## The Philosophy of Shipbuilding: Conceptual Approaches to the Study of Wooden Ships (Ed Rachal Foundation Nautical Archaeology Series)

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**The Philosophy of Shipbuilding: Conceptual Approaches to the Study of Wooden Ships (Ed Rachal Foundation Nautical Archaeology Series)** From Brand: Texas AM University Press

“The study of ship remains begins with the recording of seemingly trivial details: the thickness of a plank, the numbers and sizes of nails, the direction of an adze stroke, the color and texture of stains in half-rotten bits of wood. In fact, some of those details and measurements are trivial, but it is often difficult to distinguish the trivial from the significant until long after the recording is finished. Those tool marks and stains, grain patterns and botched repairs, are the voices of the people who owned, built, and sailed the vessels archaeologists excavate and ship specialists study. Their voices can tell us who they were and why they built their boats and ships the way they did.”

*The Philosophy of Shipbuilding* explores the conceptual approach underlying ship design and construction. The shipwright’s philosophy of shipbuilding is shaped by personality, culture, and experience. Shipbuilding requires academic rigor, a practical mechanical sense, and a disciplined imagination, all of which are demonstrated in the scholarship of the contributing authors.

Ships were the most complex constructions of any society until just before the Industrial Revolution and the chapters of this book explore the diversity of approaches to shipbuilding at different times and in different places. Experts in the field present the latest information from nautical archaeological excavations. The first of the essays explore the current state of knowledge regarding the conceptual basis for shipbuilding traditions. The authors discuss the earliest complex plank-built ships of ancient Egypt and the mortise-and-tenon joined hulls of the ancient Mediterranean. Lapstrake construction in northern Europe is examined as well as the research methodology used to study such ships. Other essays examine the evidence for determining construction methods and the problems of change and adaptation in shipbuilding. A wide range of ancient boat models is examined as well as the evidence contained in Egyptian papyri. Scholars studied Mediterranean wrecks to speculate about the transition from shell to skeleton construction there and surveyed Spanish and Portuguese ships from early European expansion overseas. Ship finds in Lake Champlain illuminate the way ship building reflects the maritime environment in a final chapter.

This book is an indispensable reference work for those interested in the ancient world, especially in the art of shipbuilding.

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