

The merchant vessel. A sociological analysis

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Life aboard a merchant ship exhibits peculiar sociological connotations. The ship is the seafarer's workplace, but it is also the place to rest, enjoy free time and relate to other individuals.

The human group that is known as crew is, nevertheless, structured as a hierarchical and departmental system, in which the professional role accompanies each individual around the clock. This will give place to a series of small sub-groups, which will in turn divide further if their components come from different countries.

All this happens within an environment that is in constant motion, isolated from society, afar from family and home. The seafarer develops thus a conduct and behavior that makes him feel different from others, which may later on hinder his fitting back into the onshore society.

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