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**Relational Aesthetics and Emotional Relations:  
Leadership on Board Merchant Marine Ships**

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Thesis submitted in fulfilment of the requirement for the award of the degree of Doctor  
of Philosophy

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## *Abstract*

This study discusses research in an environment which is not widely associated with either aesthetics or emotion. Life on board a merchant marine ship is completely unknown to most people. It is thought of as a very closed, tough, male environment, where a number of people are more or less imprisoned in a steel cage floating in the sea. Few outsiders have any concept of what they actually do on board ship, but they assume the experience must be too painful to dwell on; it must be one of those jobs that people do in order to amass cash with which to enjoy themselves between tours of duty.

This research has involved seventeen interviews with captains, first officers, chief engineers, seamen and seascape painter. My original purpose was to look at leadership on board ships, but my early findings showed that the leadership relationships on board merchant marine ships involved the open expression of much emotion, and were very often full of aesthetic appreciation of both the sea and the ship. I also interviewed a professional seascape painter, in order to be able to compare his take on the aesthetics and emotions of the sea with those of my seafarers. In this research I examine two themes which came strongly from my interviews; relational aesthetics and emotional relations.

This interpretive study on leadership and aesthetics illustrates that in most of our everyday practical activities we rely on our senses and develop intuitions we can trust. When important issues arise, regardless of what others may say, our own senses and intuitions are our best guides for action.

Aesthetic knowledge gained by seamen through practical judgments becomes most critical at sea. In order to give meaning to their lives and work, people need to have 'real' relationships: love with pathos, feelings of responsibility for their fellows. The relationships they build at sea are works of art, created through human interaction, within which conversation becomes both more poetic and more 'real'.

Art and poetry transcend rationality and objectivity and put us in touch with the more important reality of our feelings and intuitions. We gain this awareness through imagination rather than reason. The language of the imagination, especially metaphor, is necessary for expressing the unique and most personally significant aspects of our experience.

Those who exercise leadership on merchant marine ships have strong views on the importance of understanding aesthetics and emotions through phronesis and the knowledge they gain becomes crucial in discharging their responsibilities, and this was born out strongly in my interviews.

## *Introduction*

‘The sea’s infinity is endless...One must be completely free, undistracted, and it is this freedom that leads one’s hand, mind and its whole existence...Everything is moving, the air, the wind, the clouds, the moon, the sea, the vessel everything is mobile...The sea is a lot of things and that is why I keep saying that the sea is a muse. The sea is the artist’s, dancer’s, painter’s, writer’s muse...By looking at the sea you can get lost in your thoughts. The sea makes you dream...It is certain that the sea purifies one’s soul... When I am thinking and painting the sea I imagine a sea crew. Seamen are truly brave men armed with courage...they live a dramatic/tragic life, it is not pleasant. They make it pleasant with their inner lives... I learn more about the sea by listening to seamen’s stories, which are filled with the fantasies and metaphors they live by...The sea is directly related to our soul...’ The painter is inspired by the sea and by its inhabitants (seafarers) who are ‘fermented’ with the watery element. He says: ‘The sea and the ship with its inhabitants is my muse... The sea is also a muse of seamen. The sea unites the people living around it and boats become the means for disseminating both goods and ideas.’ – says the seascape painter Isosif Demiris.

As illustrated in the opening vignette in the words of the seascape painter, aesthetic inquiries invite the reader into the lived experiences of merchant marine seamen. Sensory experiences form the basis for this inquiry into the ‘aesthetic dimension’ of a seafarer’s shipboard life.

Life on board merchant marine ships is a very tough, very male preserve, isolated from much of the rest of the world by language, culture, and usually a large expanse of sea. My research shows this environment to be full of aesthetic appreciation which is often relational, arising in interaction with others’ appreciation, and also full of strongly felt emotion. Those who exercise leadership on merchant marine ships (captains, chief engineers, first officers) turn out to have strong views on the importance of understanding aesthetics and emotions in discharging their responsibilities. I illuminate the seafarers’ aesthetics and emotions about the sea and ships by comparing and contrasting them with those of a professional seascape painter.

Antonio Strati (1999) emphasizes aesthetics as a central but forgotten dimension of ‘organisational life’. The first studies of organisational aesthetics examined the physical nature of organisations, their concreteness and their ‘thingliness’

(Heidegger, 1954; Husserl, 1913; Steele, 1973; Becker, 1981; Pfeffer, 1982), of which Pfeffer (1982) has emphasized their refusal to accept purely mental knowledge of organisational life. One of the main conclusions by Steele (1973:143-4) was that 'the quality of an organisation's setting influences the health of the system', but also that, unfortunately 'the converse also tends to be true', so that 'it is difficult to engage in a healthy design process with an unhealthy system'. The latter will instead tend to choose 'settings which increase rather than reduce its problem'. These early studies focus on the 'workings' of aesthetics in organisations, and on the possibility of 'managing' them in organisational life. They seek to acquire greater knowledge about aesthetics and about how they can structure the behaviour of organisational actors, while also rendering improvements to the organisation's physical structures more remunerative (Strati, 1999).

Recent aesthetic voyages have drawn attention to the study of organisations by working outside conventional categories and by challenging the 'logic' of the organising process (Benghozi, 1987; Dean et al., 1997; Degot, 1987; Ramirez, 1987; Rusted, 1987; Jones et al., 1988; Turner, 1990; Gagliardi, 1990; 1996; Ottensmeyer, 1996; Strati, 1990; 1992; 1995; 1999; 2000; Strati and Guillet de Montoux, 2002; Taylor, 2002; Witz, Warhurst and Nickson, 2003; Guillet de Montoux, 2004; Guillet de Montoux, Gustafsson & Sjostrand, 2007; Hancock, 2005).

Aesthetic approaches move in the spaces between the organisation as regulatory and as experiential; between the cognitive and the sensory; and between the stimulus and the response. Recent works in organisation studies have drawn attention to the possibility of developing an aesthetic of organisation as a field of inquiry within organisation studies (Dean et al., 1997; Gagliardi, 1990, 1996; Linstead, 1994; Sandelands and Buckner, 1989; Strati, 1992). Previously hidden aesthetic dimensions of work processes have recently been appreciated as central to efficiency and creativity (Boltanski & Chiapello, 2005; Guillet de Monthoux, Gustafsson & Sjostrand, 2007).

It is the organisation that the aesthetic approach seeks to understand; its methodology because it conducted qualitative analysis of organisation; and its subject of study because it analysed nuances and impalpable elements instead of

strong causal relations. In this respect, the offensive was directed principally against the pervasiveness of cognitivism in the study of organisations, and against rational explanation ‘at all costs’ (Gagliardi, 1996; Pfeffer, 1982; Strati, 1997a).

The aesthetic understanding of organisational life emphasizes finite and concrete sensible experience. The qualification ‘aesthetic’ given to the approach highlights its paradigmatic break with the view of organisations as entities dominated by human intellectual and ratiocinative capacities, while all other faculties are seen as having sense only if they are subservient to these capacities or are controlled by them. By contrast, the qualification ‘aesthetic’ seeks to shift the scholar’s attention to the sensible aspects of organisations, to the construction, redefinition or repression of sensible experience, to experience relived in the memory (Strati, 1999). Strati argues that an ‘Aesthetic understanding of organisational life...is an ‘epistemological metaphor’ which problematizes the rational and analytic analysis of organisations because the ‘logic’ of these analyses has transcendent features’ (Strati, 1999: 7). As Dewey (1958: 168-9) wrote, it is ‘supposed to have its basis in what is beyond human conduct and relationships’, thereby creating the traditional distinction between ‘the physical and the rational, the actual and the ideal’ (Dewey, 1958: 168-9). Instead, it is the lived experience of people as they act (Dewey, 1934; Strauss, 1993) in organisations that the aesthetic approach seeks to grasp (Strati, 1999).

In the business world, aesthetics has long been suppressed and dismissed as ‘irrational’ and ‘taboo’. This is an effect of the spirit of achieving scientific control over social life which dominated most nineteenth and twentieth-century Western industrialized civilizations. This techno-economic rationality has reached such a prominent position – verging on hegemony in many Western societies – that it is often taken as a synonym for economic *rationality*. Recently, however, its privileged position has been challenged and is being recognized increasingly as a rather limited type of rationality, one associated with a certain era and a specific culture (Guillet de Monthoux, Gustafsson & Sjostrand, 2007). By reintroducing aesthetics and flow as concepts central to the worlds of managers and leaders, I attempt to round out and to fill in this incomplete perspective on rationality. How could we maintain that agents, managers and leaders acting outside strict technical rationality are irrational and that all humans are merely victims of their interests or prisoners of historical conventions

reflected in the limited concept of economic rationality? A wider 'rational irrationality' that does not discard *flow* as irrational but instead supports flow of emotions, intuition and feelings as sources of aesthetic knowledge affords a healthier perspective. (Gustagsson, 1994; Sjostrand, 1997).

The exclusion of the aesthetic from conceptualisations of both modern organisations and modern societies has meant that phenomena which are clearly recognised to be aesthetic tend to be conceptually trivialised (Witkin, 1974). Thus, the aesthetic is closely identified with sensuous gratification, with the experience of pleasure, and of pleasing the senses. While these are certainly important in aesthetic experience, this aspect has to be seen in the context of the importance of the aesthetic as a mode of understanding, as a mode of knowing, and as intelligence (Dewey, 1934; Langer, 1967; Reid, 1969; Witkin, 1974, 1983). It is the separation of the sensuous aspect of aesthetic experience from knowing and understanding that has led to the trivialisation of the aesthetic domain.

These observations pose significant questions for the analysis and management of organisational life. In recent years there has been increasing interest in the aesthetics of organisations (Gagliardi, 1996). There have been suggestions that aesthetics should be at the core of all social science research (Sandelands, 1998) and the basis for management practice (Dobson, 1999). At the macroorganisational level, aesthetics has been used as one of a variety of analytic lenses to understand industry-wide change (Chua & Degeling, 1993). Aesthetics has been used as an analogic (Torbert, 1987) alternative to deductive, instrumental thinking about ethics (Brady, 1986).

Berleant (1970) uses the term aesthetic transaction to describe the aesthetics of verbal performance. Verbal performance is the closest in form of any of the arts to the art of management. Most of a manager's work is verbal and interactive (Minzberg, 1990), which makes it more like storytelling. Although most work on aesthetics focuses on visual art, Berleant (1970) offers a comprehensive description of oral performance as an aesthetic transaction (Berleant, 1970; Fine, 1984), which could be used in this case as a starting point in conceptualising the organisational member's aesthetic experience as being based in the aesthetic interaction. Taylor

(2002) referred to aesthetic interaction rather than aesthetic transaction, to get at the idea of the involvement of both the performer and the audience, or what Weick(1979) called a 'double interact'. The implication is that every aesthetic interaction is unique to the performer/ audience/ environment combination (Taylor, 2002). Because aesthetic experience is inherently subjective it makes sense as a next step to look at the aesthetic experience of the members of the organisations from their own perspective (Taylor, 2002).

This assumption is problematic because there is no legitimate discourse about aesthetic experience in most modern organisations. In fact there is a well-established muteness regarding organisational aesthetics and this 'aesthetic muteness' is itself a significant problem to be overcome, not just for research but also for organisational practice in general. This is because aesthetics are about presentational symbols, and it is exactly this translation of holistic aesthetic experience into the more discursive signal system of language (Taylor, 2002). This difficulty is compounded by the emphasis on instrumental concerns and rational intellectual experience (which does translate easily into discursive symbol systems such as financial statements) and a preference for thinking over feeling (Gardner & Martinko, 1996) that is characteristic of most business cultures, management training and perhaps even most organisational members' ideas of research (Taylor, 2002).

Aesthetic inquiry has enhanced our 'felt senses' of aesthetic project through the merger of art and aesthetics. Renewed interest in the study of art and aesthetics (Blau, 1988; Zolberg, 1990) which, instead of producing a 'main theoretical perspective', observes Blau (1988:286, 269), developed on several levels and through various controversies, all of which centred on a view of art as providing 'a unique opportunity for sociologists to investigate the connections between meanings and the social order, including the level of individuals and that of the entire society'. Four principal reactions to the aesthetic status of art were identified by Blau (1988; 270) and paraphrased as follows by Strati (2000):

1. Acceptance that although art is part of aesthetics it is incidental to research.
2. Recognition that although art may arise from specific practices, it displays unique and distinctive features. This tradition of study rests on the premise

that aesthetic qualities are able to improve or to impair social life. Analysis therefore concentrates on the ethical social implications of art: whether it promotes social integration or whether it perpetuates social class differences.

3. The assumption that art is merely a social definition. Consequently, it is the institutional processes operating in those areas of society conventionally defined as 'artistic' which are studied (the artistry of leadership).
4. The presumption that art has its own ontological status. Thus the researcher examines the conditions under which different arts develop, and how their differing qualities give rise to social meanings and influence collective actions and broad-gauge institutional practices.

Especially important is the difference between the aesthetic approach and the first three traditions of study of the arts, which have made significant contributions to organisational study (Becker, 1982; DiMaggio, 1986; Peterson, 1976). 'When art worlds are viewed most particularly as peopled worlds, art becomes a vehicle for studying social arrangements of all kinds, or of any kind. But art values and products become largely irrelevant' (Blau, 1988; 272).

Aesthetics also opens the doors to artistic creation and beauty, reframing our thinking in a positive and potentially productive way (Taylor, 2002). It is still possible to discover in Aesthetics some of the ideals of perfection, which the modern era seems to lack, to rediscover aesthetic ideals of thinking, justice, and beauty, to find a system of philosophy which restores order to a disordered world, to find security in ideals of thought and form (Hopfl, 2004), because it will bring order and coherence to human destiny in a world in which the human world and the natural world are not conceived of as separate realms.

This study discusses research in an environment which is not widely associated with either aesthetics or emotion. Life on board a merchant marine ship is completely unknown to most people. It is thought of as a very closed, tough, male environment, where a number of people are more or less imprisoned in a steel cage floating in the sea. Few outsiders have any concept of what people actually do on board ship, but they assume the experience must be too painful to dwell on; it must be one of those

jobs that people do in order to amass cash with which to enjoy themselves between tours of duty.

My original purpose was to look at leadership on board ships, but my early findings showed that the leadership relationships on board merchant marine ships involved the open expression of much emotion, and were very often full of aesthetic appreciation of both the sea and the ship.

**I am interested in understanding:**

- **How can leaders contribute to the aesthetic experience of seamen?**
- **Why would leaders at sea care about what is aesthetic, pleasurable and valuable for seamen?**
- **How could we help leaders to create this experience for seamen?**

I also interviewed a professional seascape painter in order to be able to compare his take on the aesthetics and emotions of the sea with those of my seafarers. In this study I examine two themes which came strongly from my interviews: relational aesthetics and emotional relations.

The new kind of leadership I want to understand seems grounded in the fact that beauty, harmony and the sublime dwell in organisations, and particularly on board ships. Those who exercise leadership on merchant marine ships (captains, chief engineers, first officers) turn out to have strong views on the importance of understanding aesthetics and emotions in discharging their responsibilities. This research has involved sixteen interviews with captains, first officers, chief engineers, and seamen. The sixteen cases provided here as well as sea images, photos and movies as documents aesthetically-produced by seamen report the findings of the research. The sea images directly produce visual material by evoking the audience in the process of seeing through ‘native eyes’ of the places where the social action occurs.

The sea needs flashes of colour. The seafarers offer this visual material on their own initiative. They wanted to make their own contribution to the field.

These artful inquiring processes such as photographs, 'music', and films enhance our 'felt senses' of the aesthetic project through the merger of art and aesthetics. The photographs offered by participants from prior sea voyages are integral to this aesthetic experience. They may be used to 'move the senses' and open up aesthetic investigation. They may also recapture the aesthetic experience of everyday shipboard life. As part of the aesthetic inquiry these images evoke sensory and aesthetic 'content' knowledge about seafarer's life.

As for the **Structure of the thesis**, it consists of four sections. **Chapter 1** is concerned with *Theoretical background* and is made up of three subsections. The first subsection considers leadership as an aesthetic activity and invites the reader into the organisational context of merchant marine seamen by evoking a presence through creating a positive 'spirit of the place'. The second subsection emphasises the necessity for the new kind of leadership onboard due to the revolutionary changes in the merchant shipping industry and the problem of the human factor regarding these changes. The next subsection discusses conditions for leaders and followers to reconstruct their views of leadership and discusses challenges for learning leadership in a new way.

**Chapter 2** conducts *Methodological analysis* and is composed of eight subsections. The first subsection introduces to a reader How the topos of passion of seamen becomes my (the author's) topos of passion. The second subsection discusses the principle significance for understanding the aesthetic approach to organisational life as methodology. The questions of my methodology will be developed through the following subsections: Aesthetic approach, Relational perspective approach, Social poetic approach and Metaphorical translation: Embodied sense of the "other".

The next section sets the context – When the pathways of the sea meet the pathways of art – by giving a brief review of what the philosophy and psychology of aesthetics say about the criteria and functions of the aesthetic experience. In this section I look at aesthetics and emotions about the sea from two perspectives; firstly, I consider

them from the point of view of a seascape painter, and secondly, from the point of view of merchant mariners.

The fourth subsection deals with qualitative methods of inquiry as those methods that are most sensitive to and responsive toward new learning and new understandings, and connections between meanings not previously discovered. Methodological review subsection suggests a variety of methods for eliciting an organisational member's aesthetic experience through conceptualising the methodology of this research process by breaking it down into the movement from experience into representation, the movement from aesthetic to intellectual and the movement from organisational member to the researcher, the various combinations provide a variety of choices.

Validation of the data is made up of the following subsections: reliability and validity issues, the potential problems, and ethical principles we are obliged to be aware of and to reflect on about these choices. Finally, Methods of data collection and Data Elicitation subsections describing these processes will complete the chapter of methodology. Six thematic categories highlighted in the list of topics for discussion in the interviews will appear through seamen's responses in the data analysis section.

**Chapter 3** conducts *Data analysis*: The study offers the data through rich, open text forms. This chapter consists of three subsections: Metaphorical translation: Embodied sense of the "other"; Ontological metaphors; Metaphorical translation as a way of relating, feeling and acting. This approach draws attention to how we use metaphors to frame, understand, and construct reality as a way of relating, feeling, and acting. It is composed of eleven parts which are structured in sequence of quotations to illustrate how the seafarers make sense of their lives and work. These thematic categories are my attempt at making sense of what emerged from my conversations with the seafarers.

*Some quotations may appear more than once because they convey more than one meaning.*

Then **Chapter 4** – *Discussion and Conclusion* of the study. This chapter consists of six sections. The first section discusses the findings of this interpretive study on Leadership and Aesthetics. The next three sections are concerned with *Limitations and Future directions* in which this work is taking me next. The fifth section contains the conclusions and the last section summarizes the reflections from the process of conducting the study and articulates the contribution to leader's knowledge at sea.

Hopefully this study will indicate some new directions in understanding our relationship with the world and others, which in Cunliffe's words (2004: 281) is 'not about what exists but what might be, not an expert interpretation but a polyphony of voices, not about the object of study but the process of how we jointly make sense of experience in specific contexts and moments'.

I hope that at the end of this aesthetic voyage into the organisational context of merchant marine seamen, the reader will be able to view the lived experience of seafarers through different eyes, and from the perspective of their aesthetic experience.

## Chapter 1: Theoretical background

The study of leadership can be traced back to Aristotle. Plato's ideas about leadership development have proved a starting point that has been influential for many writers. The distinction between the broader educational approach favoured by Plato and the 'performative' approach might be said to typify the difference between 'leadership as arts' and the more scientific approach.

Grint (2000) suggested that leadership might be considered as an ensemble of arts: philosophical, fine, martial and performing arts. Considering leadership as a performance is not just the uttering of words from a script, though these are obviously important. Leadership is something to be experienced rather than simply read about. A performative approach to communication involves the script, the props, the players, the audience, the interpretations, the context, the shared cultures, and might be considered as an aesthetic of leadership. It is communication, which takes place at the aesthetic level and which is itself aesthetic and closely bound up with philosophical aesthetics and theories of art.

The concept 'aesthetic' originates from Greek notion *aisthetikos*. It is sometimes used to describe a sense of the pleasant or the beautiful, but in actuality is broader, and connotes any sensual perceptions. In contemporary discourse, we are more familiar perhaps with its opposite; *anaesthetic* – something that 'puts us to sleep'. At its most fundamental, the aesthetic 'wakes us up' to the pleasure of sensory response. Both natural and artistically created stimuli can elicit aesthetic reactions, and any sensual experience is an aesthetic experience.

At a time of forsaken idealism, and an absence of compassion, of failing imagination and of work organisations regulated by feudal practices and medieval savagery; at such a time, it is not perhaps surprising to find that there is a renewed interest in Aesthetics (Hopfl, 2004: 192).

## *1.1 Leadership as an aesthetic activity*

Aesthetic inquiry invites the reader into the lived experiences of the organisational context of merchant marine seamen through rich, sensory, open text forms (Strati, 1999; Taylor and Hansen, 2005). An aesthetic approach to the study of organisational life attends to everyday sensory perceptions: sight, touch, sound, smell and taste (Strati, 1992, 1999, 2000). Sensory experiences form the basis for this inquiry into the 'aesthetic dimension' of a seafarer's shipboard life. Distinctive nautical aromas, engine noises, galley tastes, and views from the bridge form part of the seafarer's quotidian routine to which the aesthetic study attends. Seafaring work, leisure, and sleep patterns are often regulated by the simple cadence of a routine 'watch' system. Simultaneously, a sailor's body and mind calibrate with shifting complexities of rhythmic oceans and weather. Seeing, hearing and smelling; touching and tasting a ship's vital signs, the seafarer becomes an integral part of the shipboard environment. The ship's steel structure is experienced as 'the organisation', 'home' and 'family'. The tacit 'art of seafaring' is developed through multi-sensory awareness which is needed to bring a vessel safely into port (Rediker, 1987).

The sensible aspects of experience are referred to as the 'pathos' (Gagliardi, 1990; 1996); whereas, aesthetic experience has been defined as an 'oscillation between presence and meaning' (Gumbrecht, 2004; 2). Both require a different way of knowing that focuses on presence, rather than meaning. Thus, the 'aesthetic dimension' of organisational life is formed by embodied perceptual experiences rendering the capacity for aesthetic judgments which are aided through imagination and memory.

### *1.1.1 Evoking a presence*

This interpretative study on leadership through aesthetics and linguistic artefacts illustrates that the way an individual is present in a situation is in itself an intimate 'knowing' or 'understanding', an 'intelligence' with which (s)he shapes actions. All individual actions contain aesthetic potential and there should be no question about

the presence of this special form of sense-knowledge (Guillet de Monthoux et al., 2007). We intimate our presence through physical movements and this presence is nested in a structure of social interactions and relations. As one captain says: ‘The crew looks at how the Captain reacts in crisis situations: in stormy weather and in periods of inspection. And then they evaluate the Captain, - how he looks after wakeful and difficult nights (and even how he smells). When the journey is long we do not see the land for forty days. And it is very difficult to watch the sea continuously... When seamen meet me in the morning, in spite of being exhausted, I must smile and ask how they feel...’

There is no such thing as a given, fixed environment that exists in separation from those living in it. It is always a mutual process. People are part of their environment, they act in it, and they create the very materials that in turn become the constraints and opportunities they face. The present is a moment within that process, and as such it is one single link in the endless chain of the interaction between individuals and their environments. Weick (1995) calls this the ‘enactment of sensible environments’. Enactive environments also contain conceptions of meaning; ideologies and religious beliefs clearly shape the way people make sense of what they perceive.

Interacting human relationships create a new form of aesthetic knowledge. On their stage (ship) seamen respond to each other as inhabitants of the same realm. As one seaman said: ‘The vessel is our home and the crew is our family. I spend half of my life on the vessel. I try to influence people to feel that they are in their home and they must care about it, to make it more beautiful. They must feel like a part of this family, of our small society...’

As Strati points out, sensible knowledge is directed towards ‘sensible worlds’ (from ancient Greek *ta aistheta*) that is a form of knowing and acting in a relational paradigm. People in the workplace differ because they interpret and act according to different capabilities and abilities (sensory equipment). They listen, they tune in, they think, they watch and they feel. Some are ‘clear-sighted’, others have ‘fine noses’, others are ‘sharp-eared’, ‘have taste’, or ‘manual dexterity’. But at the same time they constantly interact with the ‘Other’, because they are born corporally with

the Other, albeit with their own difference (Derrida, 1967) and personal knowledge (Polanyi, 1962). The interactive negotiating process even takes place nonverbally through bodily movements. 'The other is knowable through a person's gaze, gestures and looking, that is through his/her body. It should be stressed that this body acts, it is not just "container" of the Other's mind' (Strati, 2006; Merleau-Ponty et al.).

We are always making judgments based on sensation and aesthetics. We perceive through the senses, and the judgement is produced and reproduced by organisational actors. It resides in the visual, the auditory, the touchable, the gustatory and olfactory, and generates dialectical relations with action.

### *1.1.2 Creating a positive 'spirit of the place' on board*

The phrase 'spirit of the place' (Strati, 1990) refers to an organisation's ambiance and emotional climate (Barbalet, 1998), including its members' emotional reactions to the physical and social context. It entails tacit knowledge which is an aspect of an organisation's spirit that is incapable of being verbally expressed (Polanyi, 1962, 1966) but is nevertheless perceived, known, and reacted to by members. As Arnett and Arneson (1999) address the spirit of a place is produced both by the unreflective practices and reflexive praxis of intentional actors. When organisations serve as a residence for people, where individuals not only work together but also live together – human conflict is pervasive. Martin (2002) contends that these facilities cannot be understood, unless the social relations and dynamics of 'body politics' – issues of power and control in the management of bodies – are addressed. Lorber (1994: 40) says 'physical bodies are always social bodies,' building on Connell's (1987: 83) thesis that, 'The body without ceasing to be the body is taken in hand and transformed in social practice'. The physical bodies of residents are subjected to the power and discipline of a formal organisation that manages their use of space, social relations, behaviour, and bodily functions (Lukes, 1974; Foucault, 1977).

Understanding of the dynamics of aesthetics, particularly the role of human agency in creating a positive 'spirit' in residential organisations, how emotions and lack of

emotion affected organisational members increases the appreciation of power's role in shaping aesthetics. Martin (2002: 880) contends that 'when administrators use the organisation's authority to prioritise residents' autonomy and rights, they show that power can be used to create a positive spirit'. The spirit of a place is a form of organisational knowledge that reflects a facility's culture and emotional climate relative to social relations, practices, routines, and tacit understandings.

According to Barbalet (1998: 159), 'Emotional climates are sets of emotions or feelings which are not only shared by groups of individuals implicated in common social structures and processes but which are also significant in the formation and maintenance of political and social identities and collective behaviour. Emotional climate...includes emotional tones and patterns which differentiate social groups or categories by virtue of the fact that they are shared by their members and unlikely to be shared with non-members'.

Emotional and often sentimental expressions from the seamen define the work relationship and convey the sense of their feelings. It seems that the 'authentic' emotional behaviour of actors fosters a sense of community at work: the construction and re-construction of human relationships. By sharing emotional responses given by merchant marine officers the most meaningful memories of organisational life are expressed and represented.

According to Strati (1999), 'by mean of artifacts, organisational cultures exert control over their members and educate their perceptive faculties – that is, their 'sense of taste, of smell, of touch, of hearing, as well as sight' (following Gagliardi, 1996). Linguistic artefacts enable leadership to manage meaning by interpreting, colouring and familiarizing, as apposed to traditional control methods: commanding, fighting, and punishing (Gagliardi, 1990). This is possible due to the capacity of language to create and stipulate realities of its own. 'We create realities by warning, by encouraging, by dubbing with titles, by naming, and by the manner in which words invite us to create "realities" in the world to correspond with them' (Bruner, 1986: 64). As one seaman put it: 'On board ship everything is in order. Discipline

and hierarchy is as strict as in Army. Everything is in intonation. The *colour* of command is an aesthetic of communication.'

How power is deployed, and by whom, affects the aesthetic character of the organisation by influencing the 'spirit of the place'. When the organisation's authority is used to prioritise residents' autonomy and rights, power is being used to create a positive 'spirit of the place'. One seaman says: 'If a positive atmosphere is created, where people can feel the comfort and warmth which is natural for them, and where they are surrounded with care and awareness, I do not know how to express myself...The Captains, who have the power, must be persons who can influence people and whom people trust. If companies want to create their own stock of loyal people, they must look for the following qualities in people in positions of power: humanity and aesthetics of relationship. People say, 'Human souls as well as bodies should be beautiful. If these people are educated not only professionally but also aesthetically, then many mistakes can be forestalled and conflicts can be avoided.'

Organisational members enact and communicate the spirit of a place in how they treat each other. This is (in part) a reflection of organisational framing, policies, and practices (Strati, 1999). As one officer said: 'The sea crew are very close to each other. Every act of a seaman is related to others. If another member of the crew snubbed a seaman he cannot get over it as easily as he could do on shore by meeting his family or friends. We are living together; we are eating and working together and not just for one or two days but months. In our small community people who act in an immoral and ugly way cannot stay for long, they cannot survive. The other members of the crew will try everything possible to get rid of him... It is painful when somebody hurts you... It is very important to have a positive moral climate on the vessel. If there is anger it will affect everything: our work and the beauty of our relationships, our existence as a whole. It is very important for the whole crew for us to cooperate in harmony. We need to show people, to give them an example of how to work beautifully. Beauty characterises humans. If we are not aware of aesthetics, beauty and purity then we are more like animals than humans.'

The spirit of a place focuses on the aesthetics of social relations. Relational communications are linked with the most important issues of social power and ethical issues. As one seaman says: ‘Moral acts are always beautiful and immoral are always ugly. People must be aesthetes in their soul. External beauty is not real... We learn about each other very quickly, because we are together twenty-four hours... But the whole climate on the vessel depends on the Captain. He has all the authority; all lines go through him. The moral and aesthetic climate of the vessel depends on the morality and aesthetics of the Captain.’

One captain said, ‘Human beings differ from machines because of their emotions and feelings. When we are satisfied with our work and with each other – the crew with the Captain and the Captain with his crew, when everything is going well in loading and discharging you feel a burst of energy. My main purpose is to make people satisfied with their job and encourage them to feel happy and feel joy in order to leave the vessel with positive memories, with the feeling that they learned something new and acquired experience. People always appreciate your support and your responsible relationship with them.’ What is being emphasised here is an understanding of the dynamics of aesthetics, particularly the role of human agency in creating a positive ‘spirit’ in residential organisations, how emotions and lack of emotion affected organisational members.

One of the seamen said: ‘There is a saying that ‘the biggest test is through power’, and I know what this means. People who are not morally and aesthetically educated enough can do damage, emasculating others. Sometimes badly timed spoken words are more dangerous than gunshots. Especially at sea, where people are isolated, they are very stressed and in order to normalise the situations, relieve feelings and defuse crises there needs to be an aesthetically and culturally educated man at the helm.’

Witkin (1990) argues that ‘the presence of the individual as a subject, in a dynamic and active sense, is the only direct and immediate knowledge of the felt life that he/she can have’ and that ‘the presence cultivated by an actor on stage, or captured in a painting, a poem, or a piece of sculpture, no less than the presence cultivated by the chief executive of a multi-national company’ or by the captain of the ship ‘ is, in

itself, a mode of knowing and understanding upon which the individual depends for orientation in, and an adequate grasp of, the real world’.

## ***1.2 Statement of the problem in shipping industry***

Due to the favouring of economic expediency over environmental and social responsibility, the merchant shipping industry was forced to change in a reactive rather than an evolutionary manner. Initially, during the early 80s, the catch phrases were ‘crew reduction’, ‘efficient manning’, ‘single man bridges’, and ‘automated ships’. All of these initiatives necessitated the leader of the onboard team to modify his approach quickly, to hold together a business bursting with newfound efficiency and accountability. Resources were cut, yet expectations were raised towards the late 80s, where investment was tight, with reducing returns and stronger competition.

The 90s held little respite with regulatory bodies finding personal comfort in the development of initiatives such as International Safety Management (ISM) Code for the safe operation of ships and for pollution prevention as ways to ultimately solve the industry’s haemorrhage. With these changes, ‘a master had smaller crews of varying social and educational standards, more regulation, and less time to contemplate his plan. With inclusion of Standards of Training Certification and Watch-keeping (STCW) for seafarers in 1995 and continual flaunting of regulation through fraud and deceit, the master was still left on his own to find effective solutions’ (Cuneo, 2001:6).

Cuneo (2001:8) in his article on ISM has noted, ‘the initiative gives a framework for the Captain to direct his own world as he chooses. This stands true and Captain if he can handle the first 12 months, is as good a leader in the sea as any. What he can continue to learn is that there are many ways to maximise the effectiveness of his own environment, utilising the system, his ship and the ultimate resource – his team. Social isolation is a figment of the imagination, and anyone who encourages it should be actively challenged.’

From the research into the effectiveness of the ISM Code it became apparent that the Safety Management System would not be effective where there is no clear leadership and belief in its value at the top of the management ashore and on board (Anderson, 2004).

There is a solid foundation of human factors research in shipping but a negligible take-up of the lessons learnt. Human factors research ranges from occupational psychology, through work-study, to management and ergonomics. The list of human factors research embraces just about all aspects of human behaviour on board.

Research programmes are commissioned for different purposes and one of the reasons why there are so many contradictory signals is because the aims of the research often have been working against each other. National research programmes have been supported by national funding to advance manpower planning and economic efficiency in the shipping of the countries concerned. Ship operations are governed more by economics than by human factors research and it explains why the International Maritime Organisation (IMO) has been unable to come to any detailed agreement concerning manning levels for particular ships (Parker, 2001).

The Seafarers International Research Centre in Cardiff has been particularly active and its reports cover a wide range of subjects including valuable studies into accidents and injuries to seafarers, certificate fraud, multicultural studies and seafarers' families. The centre is independent and as such avoids industrial recommendations, which it argues, would make the studies partisan and therefore suspect. The downside is that shipping organisations see no requirement to implement the findings of their research and human resource decisions are taken without reference to the thoughtful work undertaken in field studies. Similarly, the centre does not work for organisations with a demonstrable human factors problem because this would turn an academic occupational research organisation into an industrial consultancy – and that goes against its ethos (Parker, 2001).

The sea staff is working in one of the most dangerous and demanding environments in the world, with very expensive and complex equipment, carrying precious human and other cargoes. If any one person or team gets it wrong, the consequences are not

only costly in human and financial terms but may also have a far reaching environmental impact. 80% of all accidents in the marine industry are caused by 'human error' (Lloyd's Register, 2004). Errors and mistakes can have many causes; individuals cannot tell easily when their performance is impaired by fatigue; accumulative stress and disturbed sleep can have long-term health hazards. The sea staff that live on board have many functions besides navigation such as cargo work, storing, deck maintenance, engine maintenance and management.

Human factors studies are used in industry to improve performance. Essential to the process of improvement is information and feedback. Legislation is a long, slow feedback process, individual training is direct, company instructions and procedures are more timely and individual discussion is immediate. The problem with humans is that discussion is based on experience, which can be selective.

Shipping as a commercial enterprise is ordered through commercial contracts in a competitive environment. Companies will not willingly share bad experiences because of potential loss of earnings, loss of reputation and liability claims.

Openness and feedback from the legal framework is thus undermined and inhibited with serious consequences for an industry, which prides itself on learning from experience. Parker (2001) has noted, 'What we see in the industry today are a number of separate pillars of input, legislation, training, manning, operations, equipment and ship design. They are made workable largely through experience. To move forward, all the elements need to be more interlinked and the quality of experience improved'. What is evident here is that as more sophisticated software is developed for shipboard use, the role of the operator becomes more critical. This in turn impacts on the value of experience, based on human factors principles instead of the safe manning certificate, which is inadequate to regulate working hours and practices. An attitude change is necessary.

At a time when we are less sure of how to organise in the face of uncertainty, the dominant culture of performativity tends to value decisive action and has ironically led to a resurgence of classical, bureaucratic models of organisational leadership, with increasing levels of assessment and control. This does not make sense. Tried

and tested techniques for managing and leading prove inadequate for the scale of change and uncertainty facing organisations.

International Symposium on Human Factors on Board (Bremen 1995 and 2001) and the conference in Glasgow (Wittig, 2001) which brought together ship owners and managers with training providers, sea staff, academics, coast guard and military personnel, as well as shore based employers such as port authorities initially posed that there was a perceived serious lack of leadership in the industry, ranging from sea staff of all ranks to senior management ashore.

The sea-going environment traditionally has a strongly hierarchical structure with the master having the ultimate authority and responsibility. This is beginning to change in practice if not in law. Leadership is increasingly becoming located within the system, rather than merely associated with an exceptional individual, the leader-as-hero. One captain says, 'When I began my career as a captain, my mentors asked me what the most difficult thing at sea was. I told them it was the safety of sailing under difficult conditions. They replied 'No' - the most difficult thing is the people. No matter how good a captain you are – with knowledge and experience – without people you are nothing. As a Russian saying goes: "One man in battle is not a soldier." It is an art being able to pass on your knowledge and thoughts to your people - I do this through my assistants, my chief officer. When you are a captain, you can't do everything'. This view includes the notion that leaders must be able to mobilise the capacity for leadership in others. On the one hand, there is a steep hierarchy, and on the other, a flat organisation with relational communication processes.

There is awareness that fleets have become more multicultural. The reality is that manpower in shipping is governed more by the international market. Since 1996 Russian seamen have increasingly become a significant part of the shipping labour market (35% of the European shipping labour market are Russian and Ukrainian seamen).

Nowadays there is a shortage of professional seafarers because although fleets are growing there are not enough people. As the result all the workload falls in the hand

of the professionals who do work leading to eight/month contract with two/month rests instead of four.

The complex nature of global maritime supply chains and increased levels of maritime safety and security have raised access and entry barriers to current shipboard organisations and seafarers. Talking to seafarers is going to be hard. They are a selective and insular bunch and don't talk openly to people outside the field. They fear for retribution from their employers.

I worked in shipping company so I became familiar with the seamen's problems, the culture and language. My acquaintance with the crew manager helped me come in contact with seamen who were prepared and eager to talk to me about their feelings and views. Knowing the language of seafarers and listening to the seamen's stories from my husband – a former Navy Officer and ship owner – helped me to understand that very important part of seamen's life at sea, their feelings and aesthetics of relationship and communication among leaders and followers, was overlooked by the management of many shipping companies.

### ***1.3 Significance of the problem in research literature***

One of the challenges of learning leadership is that it requires time for leadership to be reconstructed. This requires the capacity to resist the temptation to act decisively and the ability to practice 'reflective inaction' (Simpson, French & Harvey, 2002). My research therefore focuses on the other side of the equation; that is, on the state of mind and the skills required for 'reflective inaction'. I am interested in a dimension of leadership that is present but largely implicit in the leadership literature because it is difficult to articulate and therefore also to generalise about. This dimension of leadership remains 'hidden', because it is highly dependent upon the exact and complex specifics of the situation in which the leader is required to lead.

The current conditions of organisational life make new demands on leaders, particularly in relation to that inevitable accompaniment to change and uncertainty: the experience of *not knowing* (French & Simpson 1999, 2001). The nature of ‘not knowing’ and the ways in which it affects the dynamics of groups and organisations and the experience of role holders was investigated by French, Simpson, and Vince (French, 1997; Simpson, 1997; Simpson & French, 1998; Simpson, French & Vince, 2000). And it is their contention that effective leadership exists in the tension between decisive action and reflective inaction (Simpson, French & Harvey, 2002).

French, Simpson and Harvey (2003) suggest that effective leaders may have a way of ‘unsaying’ – deconstructing – leadership. This aspect of leadership behaviour is currently neglected in the literature. The practice of ‘unsaying’ may be an important contribution to the effective practice of Leadership. By ‘unsaying’ accepted notions of leadership, it then becomes possible to ‘say’ what practices and behaviours may be more appropriate and therefore more effective for the situation at hand ( French, Simpson & Harvey, 2003). The practice of ‘unsaying’ leadership may be one of the factors that allows and encourages shared or distributive leadership to co-exist with strong positional leadership. For a leader, the uniqueness of specific situations requires them to learn how to lead by theorising as the situation develops.

Every situation is new, and all relations have to be reconsidered and reconstructed. The creative process does not rest upon one person’s having a blueprint and that person telling the others what to do. A truly collective creative process is a circular response, a relational process of action and reaction (Guillet de Monthoux et al., 2007). Leadership in practice is about shaping relations.

One difficulty faced by any research into leadership is the sheer quantity of the existing literature. Vast swathes of the literature focus on conceptual exploration of leadership by elaborating descriptions of the traits, characteristics, dispositions, and dimensions of and the conditions for leadership. Leadership practice and most research supporting leadership theory focus primarily on objective, tangible outcomes (Bryman, 1992; Yukl, 1999), centred on leader influence on group members, with little explanation of the intricate nature of influence as a shared social process (Robbins and Duncan, 1988; Weick, 1995; Luhmann, 1995). The

linkages between leadership and sensemaking within meaning systems have been referenced by many researchers (Burns, 1978; Smirchich & Morgan, 1982; Bennis & Nanus, 1985; Kuhert & Lewis, 1987; Sashkin, 1988; Whetley, 1992, Weick, 1979; 1995).

From an individualistic perspective, leadership is seen in a person who possesses certain kinds of traits or knowledge, like the power to influence others. In a relational perspective, leadership becomes a process of negotiation where by using verbal or non-verbal communication it comes into being (Guillet de Monthoux et al., 2007).

It is during dialogic leadership that meaning becomes shared through communication, thereby generating valence (power, influence, and motivation) for both self and other, follower and leader alike. This means that participation through significant dialogue (Isaacs, 1999) may be necessary to forge relationships among organisational members. In as much as the majority of social relationships are mediated through language, sensemaking relies on language as a structuring medium.

Any research that focuses on meaning must engage with the role of language as both the creator and creation of experience. The natural language itself includes a vast amount of information. The significant point is that the language element has in certain key respects become more salient, more important than it used to be, and in fact a crucial aspect of the social transformations, which are going on – one cannot make sense of them without thinking about language (Fairclough, 2003).

As Cicourel (1973; 111) notes: ‘our human experiences continually outstrip our ability to express them in speech acts. The organisation of memory and the intuitive procedures we use to interpret an interactional setting are strained by the indexical structure of language. We must assume that a number of tacit properties are operative or plausible when we code, recode and then use information to communicate with others. Our ability to assign meaning to utterance is contingent on an understanding of various possible sources of information in a complex setting.’

The essential problem of making meaning, through language or any other symbolic structure, is that of establishing an order. Whatever order is established in such 'textual' creations is always temporary, arbitrary, and never absolute, carrying embedded within it the paradox of its own necessity – the threat to subside into disorder at any moment. Hence order is never the 'natural order' – it is subject to re-creation, sustenance, maintenance, and re-negotiation with theory and practice in mutual support / contradiction. The theorising is, of course, born of continuing attempts to make meaning and to resolve problems in a world of endless variety.

'Aesthetic muteness' is an issue of how people make sense of their experiences (Weick, 1995). Calling it 'aesthetic muteness' highlights the aesthetic-intellectual tension, while the term sensemaking sits squarely within the rational-intellectual realm (Taylor, 2002).

Overcoming aesthetic muteness may be the umbrella that brings together many different efforts to move beyond rational-cognitive perspectives. LeDoux (1996) finds a central place for emotion in the workings of the brain, and Damasio (1994) suggests that there can be no thinking without emotion. But aesthetic experience is more than just emotions, including four dimensions to the felt meaning: perceptual, emotional, intellectual and communicative (Csikszentmihalyi & Robinson, 1990).

Overcoming aesthetic muteness may be the key to realising fully our potential as humans within an organisational context. It will allow us to draw on our full range understanding and reason as humans rather than just our rational /cognitive/ intellectual understanding and reasoning (Taylor, 2002).

There is the potential for the leader's knowledge to be challenged in a new way. I have chosen to interview leaders at sea: Captains, Chief engineers and Officers of Merchant Marine. I believe that this is a robust strategy because language is a key vehicle for the exercise of leadership and is a critical issue as it affects communication.

## Chapter 2: Methodology

### *2.1 The context - My story: How the topos of passion of seamen becomes my topos of passion*

“In making the world, we make ourselves; in thinking the world, we think ourselves.”

(Levi-Strauss, 1966.)

To perceive the full affective range of a text, we must do more than analyse it objectively as an expression of the feelings, imagination, and emotions of an author or the social group he/she belongs to; we must also be aware of the text’s affective meaning as we read it. As Strati contends that ‘organisational aesthetics is not separate from the daily lives of people in organisations’ (Strati, 1999; 111), neither is it possible for organisational researchers to detach themselves from the aesthetics of their own experiences, preferences, styles and judgements.

As Csikszentmihalyi and Robinson (1990) argue ‘most events in consciousness are built from culturally defined contents as well as from personal meanings developed throughout an individual’s life’. Bourdieu (1987) reminds us that ‘a person can never have a pure, immediate aesthetic experience – whenever we gaze at an object our reaction to it is historically grounded, inseparable from ideologies and social values’. The social and cultural context in which aesthetic experience is created is an integral part of it. Whether such an experience exists on board, whether we can call a particular experience aesthetic or not ultimately depends on cultural conventions that change with time and place. The sea constitutes a living element in the life of every seafarer and the entire evolution and development of marine culture is inseparably linked with naval history and tradition. It is therefore natural that the marine element should play a leading role in the aesthetic expressions of seafarers not only with respect to the presentation of the changing diverse forms of the sea, but also the depiction of major events and other, common activities of naval life.

In the same way that music is expressed through notes but can never be reduced to them alone, in order to understand a piece of music, we must do more than analyse its musical structure, we must also abandon ourselves to the emotions and associations it produces in us. We then realise that the text not only relates the personal history of its author and the culture he/she belongs to, but also something of our own personal history and the institutions and culture we belong to. The text's 'personal' dimension may seem to have little to do with text analysis as such, but it would be as well to remember that interpretation is inevitably subjective in some ways, and that while this may sometimes limit the efficiency of our reading, it also gives us a viewpoint from which to see features that otherwise might have escaped our attention.

As far back as there are written records, I find evidence of the awe and exhilaration people feel upon seeing and hearing something beautiful: loving descriptions of the play of light on water, admiration of the colour of water with its turbulent melding of vaporous forms, as a powerful and moving depiction of the forces of nature. It is all the more surprising, then, to realise how little we know about the reasons for this response. I hope that the remainder of this thesis will help the reader understand the fascinating complexity of human potential revealed in the aesthetic encounter of seamen, whose voices have rarely been heard.

This unique body of data offers 'the *topos* of the journey into the unknown', it constitutes 'a unique adventure, rather than a regular activity...to see how the *topos* of a passion for adventure may provide insight into the transmission of passion in daily organising' (Gherardi, 2004: 36).

## ***2.2 The aesthetic understanding of organisational life as methodology***

### ***2.2.1 Aesthetic approach***

Of principal significance for understanding of the aesthetic approach to organisations are questions of methodology. The aesthetic approach is valuable if it

is able to produce new grounded organisational knowledge and to generate new concepts of organisation.

The aesthetic approach is based on an epistemological option, epistemological options, too, have an aesthetic foundation (Strati, 1996:217). As Kuhn (1962) writes, the choice of a paradigm is not always based on arguments for or against, since its aesthetic quality may have a decisive bearing on its selection.

Weber (1922) points out that in order to understand social action it is necessary to grasp both the subjective sense of the people responsible for it and the orientation imposed on such action by the attitudes of others.

The aesthetic approach developed from an empirical study of the organisational culture on board merchant marine ships is based on in-the-field research the aesthetic knowledge of an organisation yielded by analysis of interviews with seafarers. The sea images, photos and movies as documents aesthetically-produced by seamen directly create visual material by evoking the audience in the process of seeing through 'native eyes' of the places where the social action occurs.

The aesthetic datum cannot be separated from its pathos for organisational actors and for the researcher, and also the aesthetic nature of organisational experience cannot be grasped by objective observation. Following Dewey (1929, 1951), an organisation is an ongoing phenomenon which cannot be crystallized into dualistic and static forms, or into abstract theoretical forms which neglect its distinctive qualities of temporariness, mutability and precariousness. Examples of these are the conclusion that the aesthetic experience is the glue that holds an organisation 'without walls' together, which delimits it and defines it; that the metaphor of photograph conveys the organisational knowledge which views the organisation as the reality which confronts it (Strati, 2000).

There are two different methods available for the interpretation of meaningful social action. One of them is the intellectual approach, where the interpretation is based on rational evidence. The other method gathers evidence by emotionally or artistically

reliving the social action, which it does by virtue of the imagination's sympathetic penetration. It is on the latter form of knowledge that the aesthetic approach to organisations is based. The aesthetic approach gives priority to the empathic form of understanding in organisation studies. It is therefore important that researcher should seek to understand organisational life without looking for a rational explanation of organisational phenomena at any cost (Strati, 2000).

In this case, there emerges the importance of the empathic-aesthetic understanding of organisational life, as well as the fact that empathy itself, as Franzini (1997) points out, is a 'sentimental relation with the Other' which 'offers a commonality that constitutes a common ground'. 'This is the importance of sentiment for the purposes of research into organisational aesthetics: the fact that it is part of the things talked about and part of the things done in organisations'. Sentiment therefore characterizes the aesthetic study of everyday organisational life because it is the expressive quality intrinsic to aesthetic phenomena. The same applies to knowing how to 'see' and how to 'feel' these phenomena, and to knowing how to 'write' about them, without stripping them of their principal dimension, namely their aesthetic dimension. In the course of empirical research, one seeks to grasp sentiment in its being-in-use, as regards both events and the relation between the organisation's members and the researcher (Strati, 1999).

The capacity to make oneself deeply felt by others, to speak to the heart of people, to arouse their enthusiasm, to touch their feelings, to sensitise them – is an important aspect of the aesthetic approach. We are concerned with 'knowing on the basis of sensible perceptions', which is the meaning of 'aesthetics'.

As Renato Barilli (1995) points out, aesthetic feeling relates not so much to the heart and the sentiments as to the senses, that is, to the network of physical perceptions: seeing, hearing, feeling, tasting and smelling are actions which provoke emotions in both organisational actors and the researcher. As Antonio Strati (2000) puts it, 'it is on this broad range of perception-yielding perceptions that the principles and ambits of the aesthetic approach rest. Researchers who claim to offer knowledge on the everyday activities of organisational life must begin by giving full rein to their own

sensory and perceptive faculties'. We must physically feel, with our own senses, in order to know the organisation aesthetically (Strati, 2000).

The aesthetic approach prompts the organisation scholar to develop new awareness of organisational life rather than devise new ways to rationalize it. This is because this knowledge is always preceded by sensory experience that intellectual reflection is frequently unable to grasp or to express (Gagliardi, 1990; 1996). As Strati (2000) described, certain issues have been of particular importance for the development of the organisational analysis of aesthetics: aspects less closely tied to the physical-spatial or visual, like the metaphor of leader as artist (Degot, 1987), the beauty of social organisation (Ramirez, 1991), the idea that work comprises an essential aesthetic element (White, 1996), and organisational management that can learn from art more as artistic form than as artistic content (Bjorkegren, 1993).

As Guillet de Monthoux argues 'aesthetics widens the discourse of creativity to the topic of interpretation' and this is the way in which organisational aesthetics can learn from art theory (Linstead & Hopfl, 2000; 41).

### *2.2.2 Relational perspective*

'Relational aesthetics' is a term coined by the French curator and writer Nicolas Bourriaud (1998) to describe a broad strand of contemporary art in which the sphere of human relations constitutes the site of the artwork; in this tradition, artists use performative and interactive techniques that rely on the responses of others. The art occurs in the relations between the artist and the bystanders, and is a co-creation of two or more parties. The 'relational idea' was to find a contiguity of diverse artistic practices. Two basic aspects of the contemporary artistic process are 'relational' and 'contextual', which is mainly one and the same thing according to Bourriaud: 'What do relations eventually create? – Context'.

Bourriaud gives a new interpretation of the aesthetic object; the object is no longer materially or conceptually defined, but relationally. Such an approach brings together artists whose raw material is not wood, marble or fabric but culture. What

Bourriaud insists they have in common is the desire and intention to relate across the artificiality of time and space, whether that be physical, social or institutional space. They choose, design, and assemble. They start from people's behaviour and the way they live. For Bourriaud art is something you want to do as a social, recreational activity rather than a special transaction. In social interaction and relational aesthetics art meets everyday life.

There are two different ways of seeing the history of art; it may be seen as a commodified history, a thing which cannot be changed, or as open to continuous revision, leaving the historian free to reconstruct it as they wish. Bourriaud says: 'I work with it, analyse it, make findings, and all of a sudden I realise – I was wrong, everything is different. And now I have to start over. This is a power, which demolishes habits. Art constantly transforms me.' (1998)

The term 'relational aesthetics' stirs feelings and ethical values and draws us to a feeling sense, as well as its more technical meaning from Bourriaud, which concerns aesthetics where the distance between the artistic work and the appreciator is collapsed. In both senses, relational aesthetics has a common ground of sensation – sensual meanings of experiencing the world. This is a theoretical horizon for human interaction. People relate with others in order to love and be treated with love, to respect and to be respected. This relationship is inherently both aesthetic and emotional. In my research, merchant seamen's aesthetics become relational. Communication takes place at several levels, including the aesthetic level, and is itself, aesthetic.

As in the arts, which are the best example of human non-instrumental activity, we commit ourselves to knowledge for its own sake. We engage in art and in knowing for the love of creation. The Greek term for this 'doing' as an end in itself is *poiesis* (Gherardi, 2004).

### 2.2.3 Social Poetic approach

The Greek *poiein* means that to create is about images, imagining rather than literal meaning, ‘about creating possibilities rather than describing actualities, and about multiplicity not specificity’ (Cunliffe, 2002). As Aristotle argues, it is also clear that the function of the poet is not to say what *has* happened, but to say what *could* happen, what is possible in accordance with probability or necessity. Poetry tends to express universals, and history particulars. The *universal* is the kind of speech or action, which is consonant with a person of a given kind in accordance with probability or necessity. This is what poetry aims at. The particular is the action or experiences, and it is these points with which I am concerned.

‘There is wisdom that is not rational but poetic’, writes Giambattista Vico (1725), and ‘it is rooted in those relations which are not “reasoned” but nevertheless bind us to surrounding reality. ‘Thus, poetic forms of talk do not give us information about an already structured situation but help ‘us form or constitute for the very first time, a way of orienting toward or relating ourselves to our surroundings and the circumstances of our lives” (Shotter & Cunliffe, 2002).

As Wittgenstein (1981) claimed, ‘words have meaning only in the stream of life’. I have taken the position that whatever people report in their encounters with their feelings is an important dimension of human existence. Their words represent perceptions, feelings, ideas – in short, their experiences. These experiences, in turn, are the subject matter of our interpretations. They are basic protocol statements of what people believe is happening to them.

This research needs to be a reflexive blend of the aesthetic experience and the flow experience of all participants, offering ‘an embedded sense of possibilities for meaning construction while including the voices of others’ (Cunliffe, 2002). In the process, by focusing closely on the quality of aesthetic experience it will be possible to develop and enlarge our understanding of the potentialities for enjoyment open to human beings (Csikszentmihalyi and Robinson, 1990), which by necessity will be enriched through its application to this unique body of data.

I adopt a relational, dialogic stance in studying meaning in everyday practice. Practical understanding, according to Wittgenstein (1953) 'consists in seeing connections': between aspects of our surrounding circumstances, between ourselves and others, and between action and sense (Geertz, 1983). We need to consider the 'role of the other' (Bakhtin, 1986), because meaning is created by each person as they interact with others or the text. 'In essence, this means focusing on responsive dialogue and the relational moments in which we try to shape and make sense of our surroundings'. 'Research can be seen as a living process of reconstructing and reinterpreting in which we need to develop rhetorical practices that enact this process' (Cunliffe, 2002). Social poetics is such a practice because it offers a way of relationally engaging with others (McNamee, 2000).

Dialogically-structured inquiries, in which we try to understand a practice from expressions of the multiple experiences of all the participants – all engaged in the process of mutual inquiry involved, become both co-practitioners and co-researchers. Thus I seek to move beyond the traditional academic divide of practitioners and researchers in which concerns of practitioners are seen as different and distinct from researchers. Indeed, in such dialogically-structured processes, researchers become co-researchers and co-practitioners, like ordinary people in their everyday lives, dare to think 'in the moment', both from within the midst of complexity, and in relation to unique, never before encountered, 'first-time' events.

Everything of an orienting nature can be of great importance in our empirical inquiries reported in the paper occur in the meetings between us and others. Connected with these two issues is people's spontaneous responsiveness to the expression of spoken words, whether another's words or our own, with the particular implications for the person of the researcher. For we can be 'struck' or 'moved' by such expressions, and this gives rise to the possibility of poetic reflections begin from such 'striking moments', which can provide the beginnings of new language games (Wittgenstein, 1953).

#### *2.2.4 Metaphorical translation: Embodied sense of the “Other”*

Metaphor is a key aspect of language and particularly the seamen’s language. The concept ‘Metaphor’ originates from the Greek word *metafora* which means ‘transferring’. In this case it transfers seamen’s experiences.

Language can be seen as literal (describing reality) or metaphorical (allusive and creative) and the latter is central to poetics. Aristotle defined metaphor as the perception of similarity in dissimilarity, the creation of relationships or links through the interplay of equivalence and contradictions. Studies taking a monologic perspective see metaphors in a conceptual sense, as illustrative devices (Alvesson, 1993) or ways of seeing the world (Ortony, 1993). Goffman’s (1959) use of the theatrical metaphor, the idea that we are all actors following scripts and performing collaborative roles as if on stage, first drew attention to the use of metaphor in illuminating social processes. This notion of metaphor, along with metaphor analysis (using a specific metaphor to analyse characteristics of an organisation or situation), has been used by a number of organisational theorists (Akin & Palmer, 2000; Burrell, Buzzanell, & McMillan, 1992; Gherardi, 2000; Schon, 1983; Weick, 1996). Metaphors are also used as devices for critique in which we surface the impact specific metaphors have on organisational analysis and practices (Boje, 1995; Hatch, 1998; Morgan, 1986; Palmer & Dunford, 1996). Thus metaphors are seen as constituting reality in unconscious or conscious ways and can be used as a means of providing different explanations or perspectives on social activity, that is, language as epistemology (Cunliffe, 2002). As Bakhtin suggested, we need to study our utterances, oral or written, primary – unmediated speech and secondary – organised communication such as novels, scientific research, commentaries and dialogue with oneself.

Although this approach draws attention to how we use metaphors to frame, understand, and construct reality, they are used as method rather than as a way of relating, feeling, and acting. In a poetic sense, metaphors are pervasive, embedded in our ways of thinking and talking, and carry meaning in an allusive and often unconscious way. Within language as ontology, metaphors are potent dialogical

practices, creating vivid images, immediate reactions, and embodied responses leading to arresting moments in which possibilities arise for constructing shared significances (Cunliffe, 2002).

The language of the seamen, the actors of my story, is a graphic language. It is rich with images, metaphors, analogies, which give the language an imaginative capacity which made an unusual kind of conversation possible and drew us into their story. Metaphors make it possible to conjure up an image of what is being described. Analogical metaphors by their vividness make things moving and alive and lead to a movement toward *others*. The essence of metaphor is understanding and experiencing one kind of thing in terms of another (Johnson and Lakoff, 1999). The practice of social poetics focuses on metaphor as a speech act, rather than the use of metaphors as conceptual tools.

From the experientialist perspective, metaphor is a matter of *imaginative rationality*. New metaphors are capable of creating new understandings and, therefore, new realities. This should be obvious in the case of poetic metaphor, where language is the medium through which new conceptual metaphors are created. But metaphor is not merely a matter of language. It is a matter of conceptual structure. And conceptual structure is not a matter of the intellect – it involves all the natural dimensions of our experience, including aspects of our sense experiences: colour, shape, texture, sound, etc. These dimensions structure not only mundane experience but aesthetic experience as well.

### ***2.3 Setting the context: When the pathways of the sea meet the pathways of art***

Stories of seamen are powerful poetic resources. By creating images they strike the imagination, they may relationally engage participants and help construct meaning and a sense of self. Dramatic quality of stories confirms the value of taking an artistic view. Seafarers connect their feelings with their aesthetics. They gather evidence by emotionally or artistically reliving the social action, which it does by

virtue of the imagination's sympathetic penetration. And it is on this form of knowledge that the poetic and aesthetic approach to organisations is based.

From interviews with seafarers I have identified what I believe to be the salient features of their aesthetic experience as well as discovering its dynamics. I illuminate the seafarers' aesthetics and emotions about the sea and ships by comparing and contrasting them with those of a professional seascape painter whom I interviewed.

Aesthetic experience is something felt intuitively rather than something that can be spelled out. My job is to show it as clearly as possible, although in a way that includes, rather than excludes, the people who are involved in it, and to find compelling, persuasive and vivid ways of sketching, describing and representing an aesthetic experience, such that others can see it as well.

### *2.3.1 Being in the dramatic flow*

'Drama is about living... There is no drama without interaction' (Bryant, 2003) and interaction is the means of creating aesthetic knowledge. All aspects of the enactment are defined as significant. Interacting human relationships create a new form of aesthetic knowledge. On their stage (ship) seamen respond to each other as inhabitants of the same realm. As one seaman said: 'The vessel is our home and the crew is our family. I spend half of my life on the vessel. I try to influence people to feel that they are in their home and they must care about it, to make it more beautiful. They must feel like a part of this family, of our small society. We must be sensitive to each other. Sometimes people are very closed in themselves; then we are living as strangers in one family. That's why we must try to have harmony in our relationship. In order to achieve harmony of relationship the feeling of responsibility, morality and feeling of beauty are necessary. We need harmony everywhere. At the least, we must strive for beauty and harmony.'

One captain said, 'Human beings differ from machines because of their emotions and feelings. When we are satisfied with our work and with each other: crew from

Captain and Captain from his crew, when everything is going well in loading and discharging you feel a burst of energy. My main purpose is to make people satisfied with their job and encourage them to feel happy and feel joy in order to leave the vessel with positive memories, with the feeling that they learned something new and acquired experience. People always appreciate your support and your responsible relationship of them.’

All these create a bounded reality shaped to deliver some anticipated emotional experiences. Our interest as audience in staged dramas is in seeing how this happens. This drama metaphor places us on the stage amongst or as one of the characters.

### *2.3.2 Shared dramatic appreciation*

A brief review of what the philosophy and psychology of aesthetics say about the criteria and functions of the aesthetic experience may help to see how that happens. From a contemporary point of view, it is possible to say that ‘all aesthetic theories can be subsumed under what used to be called a naturalistic perspective’. ‘Even the most idealistic and formal theories of the past can be seen as variants of a basic hedonistic epistemology, according to which the aesthetic experience is good for the perceiver. To a large extent, it seems to depend on how one defines what *good* is’ (Csikszentmihalyi and Robinson, 1990: 10).

No approach to aesthetic experience relies on either purely rational or purely emotional explanations. Human beings have another way of apprehending reality: an experience of blinding intuition, a sense of certainty and completeness as convincing as any reason provides (Baumgarten, 1936). This way of seeing the world has been called *aesthetic experience* (Csikszentmihalyi and Robinson, 1990). ‘To exclude sensations and perceptions from knowledge’ is ‘to sacrifice valuable forms of consciousness’ as emotional, the intuitive, to a lesser extent the volitional aspects ‘on the altar of reason’ (Baumgarten, 1936).

Approaches to aesthetics based on the concept of the Platonic ideal stressed the belief that art represents not the limited particularities of the world of appearances but the underlying, eternal forms behind them. Aesthetic pleasure results from the union of intuition and understanding (Kant, 1790), and according to Croce (1909) it results from the process of expressing a formerly unformulated intuition. Thus aesthetic experience was seen as the satisfaction of an intellectual need to grasp that which is *really* real (Kant, 1914; Croce, 1909; Maquet, 1986). ‘In any case the good for these idealist philosophers consists in the apprehension of something that had heretofore been hidden and inaccessible to logical understanding’ (Csikszentmihalyi and Robinson, 1990).

Dewey (1934) argued that the aesthetic arose from the recognition of organic wholeness, and as such was a model for the highest forms of organisation in matter and consciousness. It has also been argued that the integration of consciousness brought about by aesthetic experiences leads to mental health and greater societal well-being (Csikszentmihalyi and Robinson, 1990). Jenkins (1958) and Dissanakaye (1974) held that the contribution of art to survival consists in vividly portraying those elements or issues in the environment with which people must cope; ‘thus aesthetics sensitises society to the crucial matters of life’ (Csikszentmihalyi and Robinson, 1990).

### *2.3.3 Aesthetics and Emotions on Canvas*

Perhaps the best-known accounts of the aesthetic experience focus on what happens to the emotions in the encounter with works of art. Aristotle felt that tragedy, by evoking pity and fear, helped purge the audience’s feelings – a conclusion with which many contemporary analysts would agree. As the seascape painter whom I interviewed said, ‘The best work is like pain. A good work of art derives from pain. When I am thinking and painting the sea I imagine a sea crew. Seamen are truly brave men armed with courage...they live a dramatic/tragic life, it is not pleasant. They make it pleasant with their inner lives... I learn more about the sea by listening to seamen’s stories, which are filled with the fantasies and metaphors they live by...The sea is directly related to our soul...’

As Csikszentmihalyi and Robinson (1990) put it, 'Catharsis brings about inner balance and equanimity', effecting through pity and fear the purification (*catharsis*) of such emotions. 'The good here consists in reliving hidden impulses in such a way that they can be sorted out and brought into harmony with the more conscious aspects of life' (Csikszentmihalyi and Robinson, 1990).

Art can give people an alternative approach to those aspects of consciousness that are too limited by the impersonal rules of reason, in which the private joys and fears of people are not taken into account. As Collingwood (1938) persuasively argued, art can effectively communicate many things that concepts cannot convey. 'If I did not paint, I would like to write poems about the sea...', says the seascape painter, 'but you can find poetry in painting. They are all together. When the artist's heart is stimulated, he starts painting and...believe me, the sea you imagine is better than the one you see, because it is within you...In order to paint a good sea you need emotion. Emotion is of significant importance. Emotion has fear and awe otherwise the sea painted would be mediocre. It would be a posed sea'.

The person has a variety of sensory links to its environment, each of them capable, in different ways, of providing pleasurable experiences. 'A man possesses nothing certainly save a brief loan of his own body, and yet the body of man is capable of much curious pleasure' (Cabell, 1919). To translate the potential benefits of our sensory equipment into actuality, the senses must be cultivated and disciplined (Csikszentmihalyi and Robinson, 1990). From the words of one of the seafarers, 'The seaman is cultivating his aesthetic perception by travelling from a very young age. As the more beautiful things you can see in your surroundings touch you, their beauty changes the way you look at other things... The more beautiful the things, the images that you have received in your life, from your childhood, the easier it is to live with this in the future...And in your work, if the Captain, the Chief engineer treat you beautifully, they can influence you; you become a better person after that work contract. It happened with one of my friends. After one work contract, where the Captain and the others were very polite and kind to him he developed aesthetically, he became more polite, he had improved his manners and I was surprised and pleased when I saw these changes.'

From the materialistic viewpoint pleasurable experiences are not very important. They are evanescent subjective phenomena, whose value must be discounted in comparison with serious and concrete concerns like power and wealth. But another way of looking at the value involves recognising that the essential point of existence is not established by criteria such as how much people own or how much power they wield but by the quality of their experiences (Csikszentmihalyi and Robinson, 1990). As one seaman said, 'Yes, we are working for money but the feeling and emotional satisfaction is greater than material one. I am looking for beauty in my surroundings, because it is important not to feel like a mechanism for earning money but to see and enjoy the beauty around us. Beauty ennobles people. As people say, 'beauty will save humanity'... I love my work very much. My work gives me a lot, means a lot for my emotional life.' According to this view, objective standards such as money are illusory, because they do not directly affect how we feel; in comparison with them, experiences are real. By this measure, aesthetic experiences are more important than supposedly objective experience (Csikszentmihalyi and Robinson, 1990).

Most thinkers would eventually agree on a set of criteria for describing *aesthetic experience* more or less similar to the one proposed by Beardsley (1982). Beardsley's five criteria are paraphrased as follows by Csikszentmihalyi and Robinson (1990): (1) object focus: the person willingly invests attention in a visual stimulus; (2) felt freedom: he (she) feels a sense of harmony that preempts everyday concerns and is experienced as freedom; (3) detached affect: the experience is not taken literally, so that the aesthetic presentation of a disaster might move the viewer to reflection but not to panic; (4) active discovery: the person becomes cognitively involved in the challenges presented by the stimulus and derives a sense of exhilaration from the involvement; (5) wholeness: a sense of integration follows from the experience, giving the person a feeling of self-acceptance and self-expansion.

### *2.3.4 Flow as an aesthetic phenomenon*

‘The autotelic experience, that is, one that contains its goal in itself’, was called *flow experience*, because ‘respondents used that term frequently to describe the deep involvement in effortless progression of the activity’ (Csikszentmihalyi, 1975). The aesthetic scholarship on which Beardsley’s (1982) list is based was completely independent of the flow research (Csikszentmihalyi, 1975). The two authors were unaware of each other’s work at the time. It was only later that the conclusion was reached that ‘philosophers describing the aesthetic experience and psychologists describing flow are talking about essentially the same state of mind’ (Csikszentmihalyi and Robinson, 1990). This in turns means that ‘human beings enjoy experiences that are relatively more clear and focused than everyday life’ a conclusion already drawn by Dewey (1934). ‘When this heightened state of consciousness occurs in response to music, painting, and so on, we call it an aesthetic experience. In other contexts, such as sports, hobbies, challenging work, and social interactions, the heightened state of consciousness is called a flow experience’ (Csikszentmihalyi and Robinson ,1990). They claimed that ‘looking at the aesthetic experience as a form of flow reveals more clearly its structural characteristics and its dynamics’.

‘The concept of Flow alludes to this kind of aesthetic joy, and although the word Flow implies motion, energy and momentum in its literary sense, it also implies change and crossing of borders’ (Guillet de Monthoux et al., 2007; 5). In psychology, the concept of ‘flow’ has been used to cover almost ecstatic experiences (Csikszentmihalyi, 2003). The aesthetic flow concept is not primarily a question for psychology. Flow is seen as a product of our bodily senses rather than being connected to our discursive intellect. Flow, as the quality experienced by many of us is an organisational phenomenon (Guillet de Monthoux et al., 2007).

The aesthetic experience and the flow experience are indistinguishable from one another. It seems that the quality of the subjective states is the same in both contexts. For example, in the case of the seascape painter’s and the seamen’s responses about the feelings roused by the sea, different stimuli are involved, different skills are

required to respond, but the structural elements of consciousness that account for the rewarding nature of the experience are the same in both cases. In other words, while the thoughts and emotions in their responses might be different, the experience, its quality, the way it feels while it lasts, seems to be the same regardless of its cognitive and emotional content. These similarities include the conditions mentioned in the set of criteria for describing the *aesthetic experience* proposed by Beardsley (1982).

‘Seamen have a passion for the sea, they are addicted to it, and the sea is their whole life. They enjoy going down to the engine, feeding albatross, gazing at the sea, looking at the storm approaching or passing by’ – says the seascape painter. From the words of one captain, ‘Seamen are romantic and sentimental people... One cadet made such beautiful photographs from the vessel, which capture the magnificence of a stormy sea. He was waiting on the deck regardless of danger, trying to find the most favourable moment, which shows the power of the waves, the unique combination of white frothy sea with the turquoise colour of the waves... I was trying to photograph with a camera a sunset at sea, but may be there are not yet cameras that can capture the beauty that only seamen can see. The sea can be stormy or calm but when it is stormy the sun takes the most fantastic outlines. It can look like a hedgehog and what ever else you can imagine... Have you seen green clouds? When the sun’s rays illuminate the sea by colouring the clouds in green. You cannot imagine this beauty and the sensation, the feeling it arouses...’ Seafarers enjoy what they are doing to the extent that experiencing the activity, feel a sense of harmony that preempts everyday concerns is experienced as freedom. It is some kind of ecstasy of joy. Csikszentmihalyi (2003) described this kind of happiness as an experience of flow, a situation when you lose yourself into a sort of new reality where the feeling of time and space becomes invalid and self-doubt disappears.

As the seascape painter said: ‘The sea’s infinity is endless... One must be completely free, undistracted, and it is this freedom that leads one’s hand, mind and its whole existence... The sea is a lot of things and that is why I keep saying that the sea is a muse. The sea is the artist’s, dancer’s, painter’s, writer’s muse... By looking at the sea you can get lost in your thoughts. The sea makes you dream, reflect when you are free, infinite, you can do whatever you want... It is certain that the sea purifies

one's soul... I can talk about my problems. My problems and disappointments vanish when I am painting. I feel that when I am in front of a seascape, real or just a representation, I forget about everything else and I try to see how every small inch is made, the movements, how does the light fell upon the sea, what's far beyond...every small detail...' Other Greek painters or poets who were born next to the sea and have accepted the special gift given by the sea share the same feelings. The painter is inspired by the sea and by its inhabitants (seafarers) who are 'fermented' with the watery element. The painter says: 'The sea and the ship with its inhabitants is my muse... The sea is also a muse of seamen. The sea unites the people living around it and boats become the means for disseminating both goods and ideas.' The free spirit of its inhabitants (seafarers) clearly influences the painter's artistic work. He focused on maritime themes and seascapes as a direct source of inspiration. His painting of steamships, with the detailed rendering of their features and a poetic atmosphere are reminiscent of the feeling evoked.

### *2.3.5 Shared improvised drama*

Drama is 'just too like real life, it is 'just work with the real thing'. 'Drama portrays conflict... What makes conflict dramatic is the interaction of minds ...the purpose of this is to change their intent...it is the battle of wills that is central, not the battle of forces' (Bryant, 2003: 86).

The interpretive (social poetic) method I chose is based on a close analysis of accounts given by merchant marine seamen. It is about human actors, their stories that invite readers into the workplace, to see and to feel what workers see and feel. Stories invite us to say uncovered truth, stories contact us, bring us together with the story. Each seaman's story has the main leitmotif that people who survive and perform at sea are those who have loving relationship with their work and speak of it with passion and desire (Sims, 2004). These stories shape and influence everyday practices, including organising and leading and 'it is worth treating these stories as dramatic plots and using the conceptual framework of drama as a metaphorical device with which to unpick the key aspects of relationships' (Bryant, 2003: 84).

One captain says, ‘At sea we become more sensitive to each other. The sea sensitises us to our surrounding circumstances, to our fellows, and to our loved ones...Sometimes when a member of crew is disembarking after completion of the contract, when we say goodbye we have tears in our eyes, we are all deeply touched...When leaving the vessel I have a feeling that I leave part of myself on the ship.’

Another seafarer told this story, ‘On one of the vessels on which the Chief Engineer was disembarking, and on which I was staying, when leaving the engine room and saying goodbye to his team, he turned, looked at us with nostalgia, and said: ‘ Oh my God, how much work, energy and emotion we invest in this place. Honestly, I feel that I am leaving home, my heart bleeds.’ I liked his words and as he looked at the engine room, we really were one peaceful family. The vessel was our home.’ These are just some of the seafarers’ sentimental responses, which proclaim the healing powers of aesthetic experience on board.

One captain says: ‘I love my work with passion. I love a stormy sea. I love a fluttering sea. Its grandeur and might – I love it. You cannot imagine this power, all its magnificence. The colour of sea is never the same. Depending on the sun, a sea takes different tones of blue and green. I like this colour, all tones of blue, but for me it is associated with the ship.’

The characteristics of blue as a colour that transmits sensations of freshness, distance, calm, and peace were propounded by Goethe in his well-known ‘Theory of Colors’ (1810). The abundant expanses of sea and sky are analogies of great evocative power, which orientate the significance of the colour. The heights of the skies and the depths of the seas, the sense of the infinite that one feels when contemplating them, besides having a pacifying effect on the central nervous system, confers spiritual values on the colour blue. When blue assumes greater chromatic fullness, as the sky does in the softness of the evening, it accentuates the values of tranquillity, intimacy, and intensity of feelings (Arnheim, 1974; Klee, 1956). The negative aspects of this colour emerge when some of its connotations are excessively accentuated: freshness becomes coldness, calm becomes isolation and solitude. The favouring of blue is always an indication of a preference for tranquil,

orderly, and trouble-free environments in which events proceed softly, along more or less traditional lines. Semantic coherence with ideological orientations is easily traceable in the case of colours. A long tradition ties us to ceremonial rules, customs, social roles, and largely determines their process of signification (Baudrillard, 1968).

Transcendent experiences that take us out of the realm of everyday life are also valued by seafarers for giving them a foretaste of other-worldly reality, for bringing to the fore those human potentialities that the social system has repressed and in showing up cases of repression. As one of them said: 'In our Soviet country...it was aesthetically wrong to be noted for your wit. It was politically wrong to think in a different way and if anyone stood out for his originality, very soon he was isolated...In our country there was no beauty, no harmony. And this is a big problem for people... The harmony, which we reach on the vessel, in our small community, we want to bring it to our country and to our family. When I return to my mother country I want to find the same there...but instead of beauty we meet anger and drunken faces. I leave my country with hard feelings...we always hope for better conditions of life for people in our country and everywhere. May be the ship could be a good model of harmony and beauty in relationship; and we could transfer this to offices, to our country and our family...'

These emotional responses all attest to humanity's attempts to modify its environment so as to make it more 'beautiful'. If the value of a society is measured by its ability to develop fully the potentialities of its members, then the making of visual beauty and learning how to enjoy it should become important for society as a whole (Csikszentmihalyi and Robinson, 1990).

## ***2.4 Qualitative methods of inquiry***

In dealing with multiple realities, above all, we require an instrument capable of recognising, sorting, and honouring those multiple realities, one that is capable not only of distinguishing those subtleties of meaning, but of assessing the role of that meaning in shaping human behaviour. It is the human instrument that is capable of

identifying, taking into account, coping with and learning from its own and other's expressed and unexpressed values.

The human instrument is capable of understanding the role of the irrational as a powerful emotive device. Because human behaviour is rarely rational, the perfect instrument is one that acts in sympathy with the emotional, nonrational, spiritual, and affiliative renderings of its respondents (Lincoln, 1985). Reinharz (1979) points out, 'Personal knowledge requires emotional involvement, not merely logical and rational analysis'. The human instrument provides that involvement better than any survey.

Qualitative methods of inquiry are best suited for gathering, analysing, and making sense of multiple realities and multiple, competing value systems (Lincoln, 1985). They also are the most sensitive to and responsive toward new learning, new understandings, and connections between meanings not previously discovered.

Learning to do something new, or assigning a different meaning to something that we already know how to do, 'is a tacit, irreversible, heuristic feat' (Polanyi, 1962), which profoundly changes our personal knowledge. This view, which relates art and aesthetics to discoveries in general, and to discoveries in the natural sciences in particular, is very different from that propounded by logical positivists like Van Evra (1971). A scientific theory, writes Polanyi (1962), may direct attention to its beauty, it may rely on its beauty to assert its heuristic capacity, it may even resemble mystic contemplation – 'a kinship shown historically in the Pythagorean origins of theoretical science' – it may display a passion which evokes particular forms of emotion. The aesthetic sentiment has nothing to do with the inner logical coherence of a theory, nor with its capacity to depict objective reality. It instead functions 'as a guide to discovery and as a mark of truth' (Polanyi, 1962) for scientific inquiry.

Husserl (1970b) has pointed out that phenomenological theory is closely akin to aesthetics in pure art, except that phenomenology is a 'view' adopted in order to make statements about the philosophical sphere. But the artist adopts the same stance towards the world as the phenomenologist. The crucial problem for phenomenology is learning how to see and how to feel. Seeing and feeling become

the capacity of consciousness to translate an individual and empirical intuition into an essential intuition of the permanent forms in whatever it experiences.

Clandinin and Connely (2000) point out, 'Narrative inquiry is a way of understanding experience'. This approach builds on a growing body of narrative enquiry methodology and studies (Shotter, 2003; Boje, 2001; Czarniawska, 1998; Gabriel, 1995) – all of which emphasise the process of dialogical interaction as the never ending construction of meaning and identity of the organisation and its participants.

Cunliffe (2002) expresses this perspective on organisational reality as 'creating our social realities, meaning and selves in embodied and situated dialogue' and makes the clear distinction between language denoting reality and language as constituting reality. Cunliffe (2002) draws on Wittgenstein (1953), when she observes: 'within our embodied responsive dialogue we articulate and create relationships with our surroundings and in doing so recreate ourselves, others and landscapes of possible action, that is, new forms of life.'

Cunliffe (2002) uses the term 'Social Poetics' to describe a narrative method of enquiry, which is essentially about living relationships. This method is distinguished from other forms of discourse and narrative approaches because it operates on the assumption that sense making is an embodied, relational and dialogic process of making connections. Whereas linguistics studies the various elements of language, social poetics explores the taken for granted narrative aspects such as: metaphors, images and analogies, instructive form of talk, imaginative trips into the future or alternatives, gestures, comparisons, rhythm, emotion.

Social poetic images, gestures, comparisons etc. provoke a response as we feel the rhythm, resonance and reverberation of sound; it may display a passion, which evokes particular forms of emotion. By paying attention to more of the above aspects during the interviews access to more of the tacit domain is opened up and hopefully a richer understanding of meaning can emerge. Certain phrases or words, facial expressions, dramatic pauses, stressed through intonation and volume – all these draw us into the seamen's stories and give us an emotional charge.

Any research that focuses on meaning must engage with the role of language as both the creator and creation of experience. In conducting the interviews and in interrogating the resulting interview transcripts, one will be drawing on a cluster of qualitative research methods, all of which focus on language and personal meaning. These include narrative analysis (Bruner, 1990; Cortazzi, 1993; Cziarniawska, 1998, 1999; Gabriel, 2000; Riessman, 1993), linguistic analysis (Labov, 1972; Labov & Waletzky, 1967), metaphor (Lakoff & Jonson, 2003/1980); Morgan, 1986), and personal experience methods (Clandinin & Connelly, 1994).

Sea literature is another approach which allows for 'novel' insights (Philips, 1995) into the aesthetic reading of shipboard organisational life. Storytelling has long been part of the lore of the sea; as such, shipboard organisations may be viewed as 'storytelling organisations' (Boje, 1995). The story of the sea is difficult to tell or to represent, using social scientific categories, numbers, statistics and tables. As part of the aesthetic inquiry, this interpretive study evokes aspects of seafarers' sensible shipboard life.

This process of aesthetic inquiry begins with sensory activation and immersion. I was concerned with 'knowing on the basis of sensible perceptions' which is the meaning of 'aesthetics'. How I have engaged in the process of 'turning on the senses' (Taylor and Hansen, 2005), in collaborative multi-sensory knowledge-gathering method, one in which I create my own method to guide the way has been fundamental to my aesthetic inquiry. This is akin to what Vickers (2002) describes as writing without a safety net; in this case, I was without a lifeboat. I attempt to co-produce the aesthetic dimension of shipboard life, through the use of 'thick sensory descriptions' (Taylor and Hansen, 2005) and visual images - photographs taken by seamen from prior sea voyages which sometimes used to complement participant-observation and can served to establish rapport and co-presence.

Since each person, researcher or informant joins an inquiry as engaged and embodied responsive dialogue within which we articulate and create relationships (Cunliffe, 2002), we have been able to establish the type of relationship that lends itself to become co-researchers.

The firsthand knowledge recaptured from the seafarer's memory, listened to and co-produced with the aesthetic inquirer, where both desire to evoke the sensory and aesthetic spaces of shipboard life by foregrounding the seaman's voice, as it is the voice which has rarely been heard. As Strati (1999) has pointed out, memories, imagination and perceptions are all foundational elements of the 'aesthetic dimension' of organisational life. Including the seaman as co-researcher and co-producer in the aesthetic reading provides an element of aesthetic style and 'poetic wisdom'. I have chosen to find a means of expression that includes the seaman's voice, yet avoids her over-interpretation (Taylor and Hansen, 2005).

While we did not necessarily agree on all aspects of seafaring and shipboard life, we did agree on much of its aesthetic nature. Brady (2003) observes that aesthetic judgments seek agreement between people in order to be savoured, that they encourage our active engagement with the world. Aesthetic inquiries also attend to the 'felt senses' of its participants (Taylor and Hansen, 2005) which then become part of the 'aesthetic dimension'. As Strati (1999) contends aesthetic inquiries grip the researcher and the subject: they cannot remain detached from the aesthetic process of discovery.

## ***2.5 Methodological review***

In conceptualising the methodology of this research process by breaking it down into the movement from experience into representation, the movement from aesthetic to intellectual and the movement from organisational member to the researcher, the various combinations provide a variety of choices. The organisational member might represent their experience aesthetically and the researcher might observe the organisational members' experience and represent it aesthetically, producing a story, or the researcher might make both the movement from experience to representation and the movement from aesthetic to intellectual. Of course the aesthetic interaction that the researcher experiences is a different aesthetic interaction from that experienced by the organisational members, seafarers. Since I am interested in the experience of the aesthetic interactions between organisational members, I must rely on the organisational members to represent that experience.

Dialogically-structured inquiries, in which we try to understand a practice from expressions of the multiple experiences of all the participants – all engaged in the process of mutual inquiry involved, become both co-practitioners and co-researchers. Thus I seek to move beyond the traditional academic divide of practitioners and researchers in which concerns of practitioners are seen as different and distinct from researchers. Indeed, in such dialogically-structured processes, researchers become co-researchers and co-practitioners, like ordinary people in their everyday lives.

Participants are co-investigators, since I view us as both having interest and some investment in understanding this experience better. The quality of the interview was determined by the relationship I established with my co-investigators. A trusting relationship, where both are committed to better understanding the experience being explored, allowed for greater access to the richness of their experience.

Reinharz's (1979) formulation of a 'lover-model' of research fits well here, because what she postulates is an exchange, a communication, a sharing – so that researcher and respondent learn from and teach one another, rather than take and leave bereft. By so doing, qualitative methods engender larger holistic understandings and work to prevent uprooting phenomena from their native context. 'Qualitative methods are those that permit both teaching and learning to go on in increasingly sophisticated fashion, without sacrifice to a priori design and without sacrifice to imperfect and unchangeable instrumentation.'(Lincoln, 1985).

Any attempt to frame the research in pre-existing academic categories could lead me away from hearing the voice of people whose voice has rarely been heard. My objective was to enable them to discover which ideas they find most enlightening, and which issues were the most salient for them to try and theorise about together. To do this, I needed them to use their own language, the way of thinking and speaking that came most naturally to them so as to surface meaning in their own context of thinking and acting. I was acutely aware that whatever data will be generated will be dependent on the quality of the interviews I will conduct.

The qualitative study involved participants who volunteered to be co-researchers, emphasize processes that are open-ended and methods and procedures that could be shifted, and permitted for accuracy, safety, and comfort. All interviews took place in a nice, warm environment, in the private office of my husband (whose business is not connected to my participants), where they could feel free for comfortable discussion. The first three interviews were video-taped but this was found to be distracting. So the rest of the interviews were audio-taped.

## ***2.6 Validation of the data***

### ***2.6.1 Reliability and validity issues***

Reliability is problematic in the social sciences simply because human behaviour is never static. Replication of a qualitative study will not yield the same results. The more important question for my study was whether the results are consistent with the data collected. I look for meaning in the data and for its repetition and redundancy across cases.

Providing rich, thick descriptions is a major strategy to ensure external validity or generalisability in the qualitative sense. The general lies in the particular; what we learn in a particular situation we can transfer to similar situations subsequently encountered. Eisner (1991) points out that more than abstractions can be generalised – skills and images can also.

This empirical study on understanding aesthetics and emotions on board ships require empathic understanding by the reader. By evoking knowledge, and by relying on the concept of plausibility, this interpretive study involved the reader in a process of both seeing and not seeing the organisation studied, and it placed him/her in a situation that s/he finds plausible.

The first compelling stories about the sea and seaman's life which made me passionate were ones that I heard from my husband and companion, who is a former officer of the Navy. He then also became a co-reader of seamen's stories about

shipboard life. Reading these stories was touching for him as he could relate to the stories and have strong feelings about them. His views are invaluable because he lived this life. And this supports the authenticity of my stories.

### *2.6.2 Potential problems*

Language becomes a vital concern since interviews were conducted in Greek and Russian and translated into English before analysis.

Language is crucial in conveying images. In this sense, the shared language is a source of power. Different types of world convey different kinds of information. It is now widely accepted that language is not merely a means of expression but a central faculty of the human mind, directly affecting the ways we think and feel. Besides, language includes a lot of words, which do not have a referent outside language. Important nuances may be lost in translation, or even between different versions of the same language.

I draw upon maritime discourse and acknowledge that both the language of aesthetics and the language of the sea might be viewed as illusive and slippery. Aesthetic experiences are part tacit; escape the ability of language to pin it down (Strati, 1999, 2000).

Metaphor is a key aspect of language and particularly the seamen's language. It was not surprising to find metaphors and images of leadership throughout the text of any interview with a leader. Figures of speech, such as metaphor, simile, oxymoron (double propositions), or paradox to some extent are called into use as a way of expressing complex or subtle ideas, always reflecting the images of leadership that they hold in their minds in an attempt to approach the reality of a lived experience. All of these serve as metaphors for leadership in a manner that may unsay or at least challenge the prevailing view of what leaders are and what they do. In particular, when one metaphor is felt to be inadequate and another is therefore introduced, the effect might be to destabilise the concepts being illustrated, as with the instability of pronunciation. I was acutely aware of exploring the thesaurus to try and capture the

right kind of language to convey the concepts that emerged, and attempted to avoid language that might have the baggage of other meanings. For this reason it was sometimes necessary to do a double translation: from Russian to Greek and then from Greek to English.

Listening to and enjoying sea stories have been integral to this aesthetic experience. Whereas these 'aesthetic moments' (Gumbrecht, 2004) become part of the aesthetic dimension (Strati, 1999) to which the aesthetic reading attends, aesthetic inquiries are not immune to academic researcher intrusions and violations. I acknowledge that aesthetic content needs to be handled with care.

### *2.6.3 Ethical principles*

Confidentiality has been considered and maintained relevant to the data to be used unless the co-researcher has been fully informed and has agreed to its use. All my participants – seafarers have agreed to let me use their names and data collected by saying it is an honour for them to contribute with their knowledge on the research.

Because the interviews have been conversational and open-ended, misconceptions have been clarified as they occurred, open disclosures have been accepted and supported. The importance of self-reports in data collection have been emphasized so that the research participant felt his contributions were valued as new knowledge on the topic and as an illumination of meanings inherent in the question. The research participant could also review and confirm or alter the research data to correspond with his perception of the experience.

When our 'other' nameless voices are brought in to the process and then named, we are obliged to ponder and reflect about these choices (Hopfl, 2003).

## ***2.7 Methods of data collection***

This research has involved sixteen interviews with captains, first officers, chief engineers and seamen. I also interviewed a professional seascape painter – Iosif Demiris, in order to be able to compare his take on the aesthetics and emotions of the sea with those of my seafarers. The interviews were conducted in Russian and Greek, and translated to English before analysis.

Additional interviews has been conducted with a general manager, a crew manager, Port–captains, superintendent engineers (most of them are ex-officers of Merchant Marine and Navy). But during the course of my research I realised that I had to exclude the shore based operation because the aim of this study became to hear the voice of seamen, a voice that has rarely been heard. The sea has always told unique stories but no one seems to be listening anymore.

At first seamen mentioned that they have never given an interview as no one had ever asked them. They were ‘men of action’. But in the process of interviews they opened up as if they needed to talk about their problems, and they saw me as their confidant. The design and process of data collection were completely open for discussion. The co-researchers often contributed effective ways of guiding the long interview.

Data collection was through qualitative interviews using an open-ended approach incorporating an interview guide (that is, research questions). The photographs with sea images and movies as documents aesthetically produced by seamen were generated by seamen during prior sea voyages. The visual images evoke a presence in the seamen’s own context of thinking and acting and may help to construct images and my participants’ sense of reality.

The criteria for choosing participants included variety of experience, concerns, and attitudes. The purposeful sample of research participants, mainly Russian and Ukrainian seamen (ages 24-60), has been drawn from a Greek shipping company (specialised in tankers and dry cargo vessels). Currently they are working for this

company but their experiences are from various shipping companies. A small sample has been selected precisely because in qualitative research we wish to understand the particular in-depth, not to find out what is generally true for many.

*The demographic characteristics of the sample of 15 informants:*

Name	Rank	Nationality	Place of residence	Year of birth	Years at sea
Oleg Monashev	Crew member	Ukrainian	Moreupol	1966	18
Arkady Savin	Captain	Russian	Sant-Peterburg	1956	30
Peter Covsh	Chief engineer	Belorussian	Minsk	1960	25
Alexander Beliayev	Chief engineer	Russian	Moscow	1951	34
Basily Tverdochlebov	Chief engineer	Ukrainian	Moreupol	1951	25
Alexander Gomzyakov	Chief Officer	Ukrainian	Moreopol	1965	15
Vladimir Kourash	Captain	Ukrainian	Odessa	1941	42
Vladimir Shikin	Captain	Ukrainian	Odessa	1963	20
Sergey Novitsky	Chief engineer	Ukrainian	Moreupol	1953	30
Sergey Khromikhin	Captain	Russian	Moscow	1959	20
Andrey Golovanov	Captain	Ukrainian	Moreupol	1961	20
Viacheslav Chervanev	Captain	Ukrainian	Moreupol	1955	25
Andrey Chernobrovkin	Captain	Russian	Ural-Kazan	1961	20
Evgeny Tougoloukov	Chief engineer	Russian	Voronez	1971	12
Sergey Loushnikov	Captain	Ukrainian	Odessa	1951	35

In-depth study of the qualitative data through a hand-written analysis was critical to my understanding and the development of a grounded theory. My personal preference for a tactile manner of working with paper copies of my transcripts is similar to that of yielding knowledge on the basis of sensible perceptions (the visual and tactile effect they entails).

## ***2.8 Data elicitation***

By hearing the voice of seamen, whose voice has rarely been heard, this study uncovers concepts and beliefs that are used by seamen to explain what they think is worth understanding and why. The participants had been invited to tell their stories and asked to try to describe as fully as they can their felt sense, what they did that they felt was significant and how they did it. Of special interest have been the storylines that emerge, the feelings these evoke and what meaning they appeared to have for the participant. Questions have been asked and reflections made only when it was necessary in order to clarify what the participant was relating and to maintain focus on the areas of interest to the research.

Jones (1996) suggests a variety of methods for eliciting an organisational member's aesthetic experience including direct and indirect questioning, asking for commentary on relived events and drawing feelings. Interview techniques such as direct questioning about the 'feeling sense' of the actions or artefacts allowed me to draw upon accepted qualitative research methods such as content analysis and grounded theory to analytically generate propositional knowledge about the organisational members' aesthetic experience (Taylor, 2002).

Organisational members have difficulty in talking about their experience from an aesthetic perspective because they are unused to doing so. The term 'felt sense' or 'felt meaning' is an attempt to capture the complexity of the aesthetic experience which has perceptual, emotional, intellectual and communicative dimensions at the same time (Csikszentmihalyi & Robinson, 1990). Being unused to talking about or unable to talk about aesthetic experience might lead to the aesthetic experience being completely discounted.

It may not be possible completely to overcome aesthetic muteness because aesthetic experience is a form that cannot be articulated (Polanyi, 1958) – that is, the experience can never be fully translated into an intellectual, discursive form. But even if aesthetic experience cannot be articulated, clearly there is a vast muteness that can be overcome (Taylor, 2002).

Overcoming aesthetic muteness may be the key to realising fully our potential as humans within an organisational context. It will allow us to draw on our full range of understanding and reason as humans rather than just our rational /cognitive/ intellectual understanding and reasoning. Overcoming aesthetic muteness will make it legitimate to have conversations about feeling sense (Taylor, 2002). It can bring out problems which were always there, but which were never thought to matter very much. In this interpretive study on the aesthetic experience of the leadership actions and artefacts I attempt to illustrate that aesthetic muteness is at the heart of the problem.

At the beginning of the interviews the seamen were reserved and suspicious but during our dialogue I introduce them to the topic of the research which they found was something they deeply cared and wanted to talk about. I was very conscious of the problem of asking leading and suggesting questions, which might bias the data.

The seaman's life is like monk hood – they don't open up easily so they initially had problems expressing themselves. My way of resolving this was to explain the meaning/concept of aesthetic experience in the introduction. I didn't expect they would adapt so easily to this aesthetic concept or express themselves so well. They told me that although they did not use these words and expressions of the concept 'aesthetic', they thought about these issues and had a 'feeling sense' about them.

### *2.8.1 List of topics for discussion in the interviews*

- If the core of the problem is rooted in aesthetic dimension, ignoring the aesthetic dimension will result in a solution that ends up being instrumentally ineffective because it does not address the root cause.
- Conflict and disagreement can improve decision quality and organisational harmony that suppresses important issues.
- The aesthetic stress, which cannot be relieved because there is no arena for discussing it, gets repressed or rechanneled into general displeasure and the opportunity for the organisation to address the issue, improve the situation and learn from the experience is lost.
- To make the discussion of organisational aesthetics part of legitimate organisational discourse.
- To catch the harmonious aspects of reality through representations of the beauty of the organisations (Strati, 1990)
- The role of human agency in creating positive 'spirit of the place' in residential organisations.

## Chapter 3: The study

### *3.1 Metaphorical translation: Embodied sense of the “other”*

‘There is something strange about language and communication: Although in practice, we use language everyday, and manage not to mislead each other most of the time, if someone asks us how we do it, we are nonplussed. We can’t seem to “see”, i.e., to say explicitly, how it works.’

(Shotter, 1994)

Language can be seen as literal (describing reality) or metaphorical (allusive and creative) and the latter is central to poetics. Aristotle defined metaphor as the perception of similarity in dissimilarity, the creation of relationships or links through the interplay of equivalence and contradictions. Miller (1982, 1985) proposed a sevenfold typology of metaphoric modes or forms of thought (the first four being Aristotle’s four types):

- Metaphor proper: a comparison of like and unlike through common properties, for example, ‘It is important to feel not as a mechanism, as a robot for earning money, but also to see and enjoy the beauty around us’; ‘The beauty is a saver of humanity’; ‘The beauty helps to organise’; ‘We leave part of ourselves on the ship. Ship is a female. Seamen in love with the ship and they are jealous.’
- Analogies: relationship through a repetition of patterns of features; for example, ‘the engine is like snotty child’; ‘When you are dancing with woman you must support her with elegance. The aesthetic of our work also in treating our instruments as a woman, being gentle with a piece of iron will give us better results, the engine will work better.’
- Synecdoche: how parts and wholes hang together, for example, a clenched fist represents a ‘body’ of people working toward a common cause;
- Metonymy: natural links through spatial, temporal, or conceptual contiguity;

- Exchange: a relationship of equivalent worth, for example, ‘The engine is my mammy. She always supports me. She takes so much energy from me but also gives me so much. The engine is animated for us.’
- Translation: of one form to another form of expression through equivalence; for example, ‘Engine has a soul. ‘Engine built in Japan is a piece of art. You feel comfortable and relax and feel proud for working on this ship’ is translated as a feeling of happiness;
- Contradiction: understanding based on the opposite of what is stated: ‘either-or’ (opposites, e.g., good or bad) or ‘both-and’ (meaning mediated by oppositions, contradictions, paradoxes, e.g., irony – ‘other than that, everything went great!’)

Although Miller saw this typology as an abstract structure or grammar of thinking, as Cunliffe (2002) claimed, metaphor also plays a central part in language use and embodied sense making. In a poetic sense, metaphors are not conceptual frameworks for viewing the world but implicit modes of speaking / writing that discursively shape meaning and experience in often tacit ways. In speaking metaphorically and using words from one context to make sense of another, we are not defining and specifying facts but startling the listener by juxtaposing images of what is and what is not. We are creating space for an imaginative, and often embodied understanding – an understanding that is not literal or universal but polysemic (Johnson, 1987), multiple related meanings being created in the stream of responsive conversation.

### ***3.2 Ontological metaphors***

Just as the basic experiences of human spatial orientations give rise to *orientational metaphors*, so our experiences with physical objects (especially with our own bodies) provide the basis for an extraordinarily wide variety of *ontological metaphors*, that is , ways of viewing events, activities, emotions, ideas, etc., as entities and substances .

Ontological metaphors serve various purposes, and the various kinds of metaphors there are reflect the kind of purposes served. This gives us a way of referring to the

experience. Ontological metaphors are necessary for even attempting to deal rationally with experiences.

As in the case of orientational metaphors, most of these expressions are not noticed as being metaphorical. One reason for this is that ontological metaphors, like orientational metaphors, serve a very limited range of purposes – *referring, quantifying, identifying aspects, identifying causes, setting goals and motivating actions* (Jonson & Lakoff, 2003). But ontological metaphors may be further elaborated in our culture. The following examples give some idea of the kinds of purposes of ontological metaphors:

### ***Referring***

‘Think, if *it is beautiful what are you saying or doing...*’

‘I think that *relationship with family and with nature gives people sense of sublime...*’

‘Beauty ennobles people. As people say, ‘beauty will save humanity...’

‘There are *people, who simply do not see humans side in subordinates*. For them they are working power...I do not want to say with harsher words...They look at people as working beasts, you are a slave, you come here to work and you are paid for this and be nice, if not, I will send you home at the next port with your expenses...There are others who work first contract as a captain and they start to build their confidence. They look through you with icy eyes. For them you, simply, do not exist as a person. I have experienced this feeling many times...’

### ***Quantifying***

‘Yes, we are working for money but the feeling and emotional satisfaction is greater than material one. I look for beauty in my surroundings because it is important *to feel not like a machine* earning money but to see and enjoy the beauty around us... I love my work very much. My work gives me a lot, means a lot for my emotional life’.

‘Sometimes a kind word is more valuable, it means more than thousands of dollars...’

### ***Identifying aspects***

‘I am not Captain or Chief engineer; *I have a lower rank and I can see between different layers.* The crew are always differentiated not by position or by salary, but by their interest and spiritual (mental) development...’

‘I love my work with passion. I love a stormy sea. I love a fluttering sea. Its grandeur and might – I love it. You cannot imagine this power, all its magnificence. The colour of sea is never the same. Depending on the sun, a sea takes different tones of blue and green. I like this colour, all tones of blue, but for me it is associated with the ship.’

‘The vessel is our home and the crew is our family...’

‘The vessel is our ‘home sweet home...And this is true. The vessel is our wet-nurse...’

### ***Identifying causes***

‘The feeling of responsibility is a beautiful feeling. All these issues of culture, discipline and morality, ethics, aesthetics and beauty are interrelated...’

‘If humanity and feelings work well together this will bring harmony to the work.’

‘The beauty helps to organise’;

‘The beauty is a saver of humanity’;

‘The sea sensitises us to our surrounding circumstances, to our fellows, and to our loved ones...’

‘When leaving the vessel I have a feeling that I leave part of myself on the ship...’

‘We must be sensitive to each other. Sometimes people are very closed in themselves; then we are living as strangers in one family. That’s why we must try to have harmony in our relationship...’

‘Human beings differ from machines because of their emotions and feelings...’

‘People have different feelings of beauty. One has a more cultivated feeling and another less. People who had never been taught aesthetics may think that aesthetics is unnecessary and that there is no need for aesthetic in the work...’

‘There is also technical aesthetic in the work. All Engines actually have the same function but the aesthetic experience is different. For example, an engine built in Japan is a piece of art. On the vessel with a Japanese engine you feel comfortable and relaxed and feel proud of working on this vessel.’

### ***Setting goals and motivating actions***

‘Seamen have a passion for the sea, they are addicted to it, and the sea is their whole life. They enjoy going down to the engine, feeding albatross, gazing at the sea, looking at the storm approaching or passing by’.

‘I spend half of my life on the vessel. I try to influence people to feel that they are in their home and they must care about it, to make it more beautiful. They must feel like a part of this family, of our small society...’

‘In order to achieve harmony of relationship the feeling of responsibility, morality and feeling of beauty are necessary. We need harmony everywhere. At the least, we must strive for beauty and harmony.’

‘When we are satisfied with our work and with each other: crew from Captain and Captain from his crew, when everything is going well in loading and discharging you feel a burst of energy. My main purpose is to make people satisfied with their job and encourage them to feel happy and feel joy in order to leave the vessel with positive memories, with the feeling that they learned something new and acquired experience. People always appreciate your support and your responsible relationship of them.’

### ***Personification***

Perhaps the most obvious ontological metaphors are those where the physical object is further specified as being a person. This allows us to comprehend a wide variety of experiences with nonhuman entities in terms of human motivations, characteristics, and activities. What they all have in common is that they are extensions of ontological metaphors and that they allow us to make sense of phenomena in the world in human terms – terms that we can understand on the basis of our own motivations, goals, actions, and characteristics.

Here are some examples:

‘The ship is a female (she) and you cannot know her without loving her.’

‘The engine is my mammy. She always supports me. She takes so much energy from me but also gives me so much. The engine is animated for us.’

‘The engine has a soul’;

‘The engine is like a snotty child’; ‘stubborn vessel’; ‘lucky lady’; ‘old lady’ (about the vessel);

### ***Events, Actions, Activities, and States***

We use ontological metaphors to comprehend events, actions, activities, and states. Events and actions are conceptualised metaphorically as objects, activities as substances, states as containers.

These metaphors specify different kinds of objects. They give us different metaphorical models and thereby allow us to focus on different aspects of our experience. Ontological metaphors like these are so natural and so pervasive in our thought that they are usually taken as self-evident, direct descriptions of mental phenomena. The fact that they are metaphorical never occurs to most of us and they seem perfectly natural to most of us as an integral part of the model of the mind that we have in this culture; it is the model most of us think and operate in terms of.

### ***Container metaphors***

#### ***The Visual Field***

We conceptualize our visual field as a container and conceptualize what we see as being inside it. Even the term ‘visual field’ suggests this. The metaphor is a natural one that emerges from the fact that, when you look at some territory, your field of vision defines a boundary of the territory (the part that you can see). Given that a bounded physical space is a *container* and that our field of vision correlates with that bounded physical space, the metaphorical concept *visual fields are containers* emerges naturally.

‘...Maybe there are not yet cameras that can capture the beauty that only a seaman can see. The sea can be stormy or calm but when it is stormy the sun takes the most amazing outlines. It can look like a hedgehog and anything else you can imagine... Have you seen green clouds? It’s when the sun’s rays illuminate the sea by colouring the clouds in green. You cannot imagine this beauty and the sensation, the feeling it arouses...’

‘...And when after the rain, a huge rainbow appears above the sea, it seems like the ship is entering the arch. By marine tradition a seaman must make a wish and his wish will come true...’

‘At sea we can observe a wonderful sunset. I can call my friend (after working hours) and say: come up to the deck to see a beautiful sunset. Or sometimes by loudspeaker you can say: on the star-board side you can see a fantastic rainbow.

In my last contract we saw whales with their babies come so closed to the vessel. They were playing with the vessel and blow fountains. After lunch usually we have works on the deck with chipping hammer and they make a lot of noise. And we stopped works in order do not scare them and to observe and tape this on the video. It does not happen often when whales come so closed...’

‘I always call their (the crew) attention to the beauty of the nature surrounding us. It can be a school of dolphins playing with a vessel or when a whale following the ship turns on its side and wagging with flipper then tries again and again to catch up with vessel by saluting us and playing with us, and doing it again and again’.

‘I like very much stormy sea. I love fluttering sea. Its grandeur and might – I love it. You cannot imagine this power, all its magnificence. The colour of sea is never the same. Depending on the sun a sea takes different tones of blue and green colour. I like this colour but for me it associates only with the ship. When I am on the shore I do not like blue colour, all tones of blue...’

### ***Metonymy***

Like metaphors, metonymic concepts structure not just our language but our thoughts, attitudes, and actions. And like metaphoric concepts they are grounded in our experience. In fact, the grounding of metonymic concepts is in general more obvious than is the case with metaphoric concepts, since it usually involves direct physical or causal associations: *the part for the whole*, *producer for product*,

*institution for people responsible, the place for the institution, the place for the event* and so on.

The conceptual systems of cultures and religions are metaphorical in nature. Cultural and religious symbolism is a special case of metonymy. Symbolic metonymies are critical links between everyday experience and the coherent metaphorical systems that characterise religions and cultures. For example:

‘And when after the rain, a huge rainbow appears above the sea, it seems like the ship is entering the arch. *By marine tradition* a seaman must make a wish and his wish will come true. All this relaxes people from work. We have very intensive working hours and sometimes there is no time even to think about aesthetics. But if it is possible after working hours we organise events which help people have a break...For example, when we are passing the Equator we have *an ancient tradition of ordaining a seaman*. One of the seamen dresses as the god Poseidon and comes to the Captain and we perform speeches from mythology. People like to celebrate this tradition.’

‘Every captain is trying to make people to remember and respect the vessel... to make them feel that they learned something new and acquired experience,...how many seamen have been educated on this vessel’;

‘Russians have ancient Marine traditions. But unfortunately we have lost our traditions in the political chaos. I am looking at the young generation; they have a different relation with Marine profession, it is more commercialised. They are not interested in the opportunity to see the world and travel. Only young cadets, which are the second and third generation of seamen, can become the future of our Russian Marine. There are still seamen who have stories to tell. My son graduated from the Marine Academy and in his first voyage he was on a very difficult vessel. He likes this work in spite of difficulties because it was his first practice at sea as a cadet. And I was very proud for him when our crew manager said: ‘Andrey, your son is a very good seaman’. I was very much touched. My son took such beautiful photographs from the vessel, which imprint the magnificence of a stormy sea. He was waiting on the deck heedless of danger trying to find the most favourable moment, which shows the power of the waves, this unique combination of white frothy sea with the turquoise colour of the waves...’

‘After a first contract as a captain you enter the new stage of a seaman’s career. Many of the new Captains cannot stand the pressure of responsibility of Captain’s position. Many of them break down and become a drunkard...’

### *The objects of metaphorical definition*

#### *Natural kinds of experience*

Metaphors allow us to understand one domain of experience in terms of another. This suggests that understanding takes place in terms of entire domains of experience and not in terms of isolated concepts. Each such domain is a structured whole within our experience that is conceptualised as what Johnson and Lakoff (2003) called an experiential gestalt. Such gestalts are experientially basic because they characterise structured wholes within recurrent human experiences. Domains of experience that are organised as gestalts in terms of such natural dimensions seem to us to be *natural kinds of experience*. They are natural in the following sense: these kinds of experiences are a product of

*Our bodies* (perceptual and motor apparatus, mental capacities, emotional make up, etc.)

*Our interactions with our physical environment* (moving, manipulating objects, eating, etc.)

*Our interactions with other people within our culture* (in terms of social, political, economic, and religious institutions)

An experiential account of how people understand their experience requires a view of definition very different from the standard account and are defined in terms of their roles in natural kinds of experiences, concepts are defined by prototypes and by types of relations to prototypes (primarily in terms of interactional properties). Rather than being rigidly defined, concepts arising from our experience are open-ended. Metaphors and hedges are systematic devices for further defining a concept and for changing its range of applicability.

‘Once we can identify our experiences as entities or substances, we can refer to them, categorize them, group them, and quantify them – and by this means, reason them.’ (Jonson & Lakoff, 2003).

### ***3.3 Metaphorical translation as a way of relating, feeling and acting***

The practice of social poetics focuses on metaphor as a speech act, rather than the use of metaphors as conceptual tools (Cunliffe, 2002). In a poetic sense, metaphors are pervasive, embedded in our ways of thinking and talking, and carry meaning in an allusive and often unconscious way. Within language as ontology, metaphors are potent dialogical practices, creating vivid images, immediate reactions, and embodied responses leading to arresting moments in which possibilities arise for constructing shared significances (Cunliffe, 2002).

***This approach draws attention to how we use metaphors to frame, understand, and construct reality as a way of relating, feeling, and acting.***

The following sequence of quotations from the seamen I have talked to illustrates how they make sense of their lives and work. Reading these responses one can see how the seafarers construct their reality through:

- 1. Loving relationships***
- 2. Human belonging as being really about living relationships***
- 3. Emotional relations***
- 4. Harmony in living conditions and in relationships***
- 5. Relating through feeling***
- 6. Aesthetics on board***
- 7. Why the aesthetic experiences are pleasurable and valuable for seamen***
- 8. Knowing through feeling***
- 9. Aesthetic judgments and issues of ethics and social power***
- 10. Creating positive spirit on board***
- 11. Knowing and acting through practical judgments***

As I explained in the introduction, these thematic categories emerged out of our conversations.

### *3.3.1 Loving relationships*

All the stories that I have heard from seamen have the main leitmotif that people who survive and perform at sea are those who have a *loving relationship* with their work.

From the words of *Chief Engineer Alexander Beliyev*: ‘Satisfaction from the job can be achieved only if you love your job. And when you love your job you try to obtain results. Otherwise there is no aim, no result. If you are working in order to stay on the vessel, not be fired and only to be paid, I think it is not possible to work like this.

Misunderstandings between people on the vessel are based on this. Some of them want to be satisfied with their work, others just spend their time. This relation to the work, this behaviour can be clarified in conflicts. One works with all his heart another does it without feeling and says: ‘I do not know what else he (the boss) wants from me. I have done my job.’ If he does not love his job, he does not like it and he cannot understand what you ask of him...Aesthetic relationship in our work...When a man does not like his work, or he is here (in this working place) by mistake, or he is lazy, I do try to explain to him why we need to complete this work but he thinks that it is unnecessary or pointless, here the dialogue ends...’

‘To understand all this one needs to go through all the things I have passed as a seaman 34 years at sea. In the past professionalism was valuable and was accounted not by age but by experience. Relationship in the engine room was different; relation to the work was different...more creative. Everyone was trying to do his work with all his heart and this relation was awarded...’

As *Chief Engineer Sergey Novitsky* puts it, ‘I love my work very much and respect it. Maybe it is egoistical to say, but my work is the best. Because she (my job) supports me from my childhood and I respect her. I often hear the word ‘pathos’. I do not use this word, but my wife tells me that after three month of disembarking

period it is a time to go back to the sea. She understands that I miss the sea, my work. And I feel that my soul seeks the sea...'

'I was very proud that I was a seaman. Now I am very proud for my profession as an engineer, and this feeling of satisfaction from my work is very important for me...'

From the words of *Captain Khromikhin*: 'I had not sailed for two and half years... All my certificates were still valid when I received a call from crew agency and they say that if I agreed with the contract after two months I would have to embark on the Greek vessel. My second wife said that in that moment she could see that my face brightened from happiness. My wife is a very good person, and she feels for me. She says that I am very happy person because I have work, which I love very much and I am living two different lives: at sea and on shore. And this is true. I love my profession and I love sailing. My wife says: 'here on the shore you have your one family and at sea you have another one – it is your crew. When company bought new tanker vessel she was saying: 'Now you have a new vessel, new toy to play with it...'

### ***'You cannot know her without loving her'***

As *Captain Kourash* says: Now the relationship in some way has changed. People see the vessel only as a place where they earn money and this is a terrible feeling. It must be very hard. I am sure that these people must be very unhappy...'

'In the past people went at sea by vocation. It was a romantic profession. Of course he loved his profession and he was trying to be professional. But now if you ask the young cadets or crewmembers: 'Do you like your profession?' The answer: 'No'- - And why did you come here? – Where else can I earn money? And the same answer you can receive from some of the officers and crewmembers...

It is very hard to work with people who do not love their work. I believe that it is possible to inculcate in people love for the vessel. And when there is a love for the vessel then we have good relations on the vessel. How can we inculcate love in people? First of all everyone must understand that the vessel is our home. If this feeling is inculcated in the seamen then from the first step to the vessel's ladder he cares about the vessel, tries to keep it clean and make it beautiful. On the other hand he feels care and warmth on the vessel, and good food makes him feel happy. And

he starts to love the vessel. It is not a secret that if the food is good and well organised on the vessel it can be even better than in many families of the seamen. If the cook is good and the food is good this is important factor for inculcating love in seamen. And when he returns home he says to his wife: 'our cook on the vessel cooked so well. He was so nice to us: he meets us with his white suit; he smiles at us, he always talks to us, and always feeds us with tasty food. He was like a mother for us'. (I know this from the words of the seamen).'

'The ship is a female (she) and you cannot know her without loving her.'

From the words of *Captain Loushnikov*: 'Another very important quality for a seaman is love of his profession. If you have all the above qualities, you must complete with love for this profession.'

As *Captain Shikin* says: 'The men see that everything I do is done with love for my work. Our relationship depends on inter-related feelings that have developed. If you do something without energy and with your head down, then the result can never be effective. You need to do everything with love. If your only motivation is money, without love for people, then it won't work. This love comes from inside, it can't be imposed. This love for the job is a gift. The key to everything is love of people. It mustn't be a demonstration of your position. People see and feel a captain's love. People need to be led with love. When a man has a relationship of love with his work, he enjoys it and has a passion for it...I believe that my passion for my work makes my work more effective. It's this passion that is the engine for my love of my work. Everything is inter-related. This is harmony.'

### ***Like being 'married to the ship'***

A male-dominated occupation, the English language seafaring discourse includes ***ships and seas as 'she is'*** along with associated gender metaphors (Norling, 2003), ***like being 'married to the ship' or having 'the sea as a mistress'***.

From the words of *Chief Engineer Alexander Beliayev*: 'The ship is a female. When we talk about the vessel we say 'she'. Seamen are in love with the vessel and they

are jealous. Once the Captain was leaving the vessel and he touched her with love and said: 'Marica-Maritsa (the name of the vessel), only you love me'.

'Once, the previous chief engineer, when I was replacing him, asked me: 'Please, be aware of some repairs for the engine, which I could not complete'. And I understood that he was worried and cared about the vessel...'

'I came to the vessel, which was in bad technical condition. When it is possible to fix damages, then you have a great moral satisfaction from the result, you are aware and care and become more close to your vessel. Another time the vessel was technically unrepairable and you were watching how the engine was breaking in front of you. It is very disappointing and you leave this vessel with feeling pain and unfortunate.

You begin to love the vessel when you learn her and can control her and the more you learn about her the more you become attached to her, you bond with her. You cannot know her without loving her...'

'Usually you plan your work but if the vessel is very old and needs many repairs, you feel that you leave your heart and soul. And it is very difficult to leave her (the vessel). We leave part of us on the vessel. Every seaman remembers the vessel where he was working, and always remembers her with love. How much time we spent and how we felt on the vessel, how much work we did and how much energy we invested there...'

From the words of *Captain Khromikhin*: 'The ship is our mammy. In this company I was working on the same vessel for five years and when owners sold her (vessel) I had a feeling that I had lost something, as if I had lost one of my fingers. This vessel was 27 years old. It is old age for the vessel and I called her my old lady. Only I could work on this vessel and she did not cause any damage. But when another captain came on board there were always some problems. She was a mysterious lady. Once I had to deliver the vessel to another very experienced and old Captain and he said to me: 'She is not leaving you.'

Despite being built of iron the vessel has a soul. When we have stormy weather and it is so difficult to turn her (vessel) because she is very heavy lady, I always talk to her: 'please, my dear, help me a little. Do not betray me.' And you can see that she takes speed and the temperature of the main engine increases and we sail well...'

As *Captain Kourash* says: 'The vessel is a female ('she'). You cannot know her without loving her. Our family must love this vessel too... Yes, all our family and children love the vessel. Those times we were attached to our vessel. It was our second home. Our families visited us on the vessel and celebrated holidays all together.

'The vessel is our 'home sweet home'. And this is true. The vessel is our wet-nurse...'

As *Captain Savin* puts it, 'It is known that a seaman behave towards the ship as they do towards a woman. The ship is female and seamen love it like a woman-even I call an old ship "My old lady". When a ship is old and you know it's its last voyage before going for scrap, it's very hard on you-you have a heavy heart. I will never forget taking my previous ship for scrap. All the crew had disembarked and only four of us remained on it- I, the chief officer, the chief engineer and the fourth engineer. The fourth engineer turned off the last diesel generator. We then lowered the flag and sat for a few minutes in my cabin with our heads lowered, not speaking. We then left the ship and went to our hotel, next to the port. Many got drunk with sorrow that night. The next morning, while leaving, we saw the ship for the last time. Our hearts were heavy with sorrow. This ship had been like our wet nurse. It was very difficult to leave it. We knew every part of it and had had many beautiful voyages on it...'

'The ship is our home, our safety. It's our everything and we give a part of us to it. Even when a contract ends on a ship and you hand over the documentation to the next captain, until the last minute you don't want to leave it. Even when you are making your last step on the trap, when you're setting foot on land and looking at the ship for the last time, you feel great sorrow because you know that tonight you are not going back to the ship-you are going back home to rest.'

From the words of *Captain Loushnikov*: 'The ship is a lady and you always respect her. In ancient times, there were sailing boats- they had a beautiful female figure and they were beautiful in order to honour the god Poseidon. All the ships had a beautiful, carved female figure to beautify the ship but also to give her a personal characteristic...'

‘The ships may have women’s names, or names that have meaning for the owner, like ‘Spirit of London’, ‘Mama Mia’, ‘Adriatic Star’ and ‘Legend’. The purpose of the name is to honour the ship. We use this metaphorical relationship everywhere - we have lovingly call our automated navigation system the ‘Asenka’ so she will obey us and be kind to us.’

As *Captain Chervanev* puts it, ‘You bond with the ship. I remember one sentimental story. I was working on a ship. When it was sent for scrap, it brought tears to my eyes...I had come to this ship when I was 20 and worked there until the age of 31 -I came as a young cadet, fourth officer, and reached chief officer. The years there were my best because at that age you are full of energy and I had many experiences during that time. Perhaps that ship was lucky for me...’

### *Loving the sea like a mistress*

Living and working aboard vessels, the sea ‘environs’ the seaman in an active engagement with nature which evokes certain aesthetic judgments. For example, the aesthetic category of *the sublime* refers to a state of ‘awesome grandeur’ (Strati, 1999) produced by the seafarer’s primal, physical contact with the sea and with nature’s elements. It is experienced as pleasure mixed with pain (Strati, 2000); whereby, contemplating the awesome grandeur of the sea, the seaman is ‘simultaneously fragile and composed’ (Brady, 2003: 37).

From the words of *Captain Khromikhin*: ‘I like very much stormy sea. I love the fluttering sea. Its grandeur and might – I love it. You cannot imagine this power, all its magnificence. The colour of sea is never the same. Depending on the sun the sea takes different tones of blue and green colour. I like this colour but for me it is associated only with the ship. When I am on shore I do not like the blue colour, any tones of blue.’

‘Russian seamen love the sea. They are right men for this job. I had a Norwegian friend who was a Captain five years. Norwegians stay at sea only 5-7 years. When he learnt that I am at sea already 26 years he was surprised...’

As *Chief Engineer Sergey Novitsky* puts it, ‘I love my work very much and respect it. ...I often hear the word ‘pathos’. I do not use this word, but my wife tells me that after three month of disembarking period it is a time to go back to the sea. She understands that I miss the sea, my work. And I feel that my soul seeks the sea...’

As *Chief Engineer Peter Covsh* said: ‘The vessel is our home – ‘sweet home’...How I chose the profession of seaman...I loved the sea. I love my profession. Sometimes you come to the engine room and the engines are working and everything is clean and you have a feeling of peace and satisfaction. I like the sound of the engine...’

As *Captain Savin* puts it ‘The language of seamen is rich in marine metaphors and in folklore in general. When we are on land, we feel nostalgic about the sea. I don’t know what it is that we miss most-the sea or the work. A seaman has passion and love for the sea and the ship. I often caress the ship and say: “My good, good ship!” ‘There is always nostalgia when I leave my home to go on a voyage. My dog knows I’m leaving days before, so he never leaves my side and sleeps beside me.’

### ***The sea and the ship as a mentor and a stealer of youth***

Seafarers traditionally joined the occupation at an early age. Their myths and stories may be largely reflective of youthful experiences and rites of passage. As seamen say ***‘The sea takes so much’; it is both a mentor and a stealer of youth.***

As *Captain Chervanev* puts it, ‘The love of the sea is inside every seaman. Even simple sailors, who did not have the opportunity to become officers, even they have a bond with the sea. I know old sailors who deserve our admiration. These sailors are seamen in their souls. I still keep in touch with such sailors, with whom I started my career. Sometimes, you can learn more from these men – the so-called ‘sea wisdom’ – than from new, highly qualified officers, many of whom will never gain or possess this ‘sea wisdom’. This is something that can never be taught...’

As *Chief Engineer Evgeny* says: ‘If someone does not love his job, it is very difficult for them to stay in this job. I entered the nautical academy at the age of 15, when I viewed this career romantically...’

‘If you don’t love this job, not even a high salary will keep you here. You know from their first trip if they are cut out to be seamen. I consider it a good thing for someone to admit this even after four years at the academy. Nowadays, the nautical academy prepares more specialised cadets who if this profession does not suit them, they resign. Of course, in order to leave you need to have something else to go to.’

‘If a sailor has a family, it needs to support him. He has two families-one at sea and one at home. The latter needs to be there for him when he is at sea. For example, my son who by now would have become chief engineer abandoned his career after his wife left him because he feared he would never be able to have a family as a seaman. If he feels calm and secure with his family life, then his work goes well. You can see it in his face if he has a happy family life. And this reflects in his work...’

From the words of *Captain Loushnikov*: ‘On the matter of love of the seamen for the sea and the ship, this is a very personal matter. For example, when I was on a 15-year-old ship, I used to go to near her and talk to her. I would think about all the captains she had trained-because a ship really teaches you. The soul of the ship is a seaman, you talk to her as if she was a real person, and you tell her: “Oh ship, how many families have you nurtured!” When I leave a ship, I caress her like a human being. Because she is like a fellow human being, you try to take care of her and you remember her name forever.’

‘We must respect the ship as she is animate; every ship has her character and aura. There are ships that obey, others that don’t and others still that are very stubborn. There are everlasting vessels that have been through a lot of storms, but nothing has ‘killed’ them. They may be 20-30 years old, they may have had many repairs. They are ships that never die. Owners never want to sell such ships, they keep them forever.’

### *3.3.2 Human belonging as being really about living relationships*

For seamen the term ‘shipmate’ means so much. They talk about *human belonging as being really all about living relationships*; ‘You work with others, you eat next

to them, and then, of course you learn that the most important thing is how to get along with others’

From the words of *Oleg Monashev*: ‘When you are in the work place the best stimulus is to receive normal human treatment and have a human relationship; you do not need anything else. That is like a good, peaceful family... Sometimes against our moral principals we decide in favour of rationalism. People always, in every situation must remain humans. First and foremost we are humans. People must be honest with themselves and with others. The most fearful judge is your conscience. And if you have good relations with your conscience then you feel happy.’

A shipboard ‘twenty-four-seven’ society builds complex intimacies that potentially enhance camaraderie.

*Chief Engineer Vasily Tverdochlebov* says: ‘Relationships between people depend on their professionalism and their individual qualities: relation to the work and relations with people.

The vessel is like a tin. People know each other from head to toe: all the positive and negative sides of their character can be made very clear. Each seaman comes to the vessel with his own problems and based on this people behave differently...’

‘Relationships on shore are changing. There is a lack of kindness, compassion, and trust between people... People at sea live in their own world, and this world can be regulated by the higher command. All commanding team knows the crew from their actions, everything is clear and can be seen...’

‘At sea people live together and get close and learn each other very well. Usually they can foresee how to react in every given situation. If the conflict arises people become sulky and closed to themselves.

If the chief engineer, or the captain, was unfair in punishing the seaman, then they need to clarify and apologize. There can be situations when under your emotional stress you say harsh words and hurt others. I say: ‘Count till ten and when you cool off it will be easier to recognize if you are right or wrong.’

‘The deck crew work together and spend their free time together. People get close through the work. The engine crew does the same. They are more closed together than with the rest of crew...’

As *Alexander Beliayev* says: ‘Relationships on shore and at sea are different. On the vessel you can somehow change the situation, influence it. You must be professional and with correct personality. But if you are a very bad person then even your professionalism cannot be helpful.

People always strive after similar people. Because when they do not like and do not feel comfortable they look for the people who understand them. In the engine department we had two engineers: the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> assistants were very intelligent and educated men. The electrician wanted their company but they rejected him, they could not accept him. His culture, his aesthetic was different.

When a young cadet comes to the vessel he is exploring himself. If he does not succeed once, twice then it is hard for him to stay on the vessel. Because if a seaman does not find himself then it is impossible, it is very difficult to stay.’

From the words of *Chief Engineer Evgeny*: ‘At sea, only seamen who have great will can survive...In general, you can distinguish who will be a good seaman and who won’t. For example, you can see who will stay in his cabin and who will still try to work when it’s rolling and pitching during a storm. Only the strongest can survive at sea.’

### ***‘The vessel is our home – ‘sweet home’***

From the words of *Chief Engineer Peter Covsh*: ‘Care, awareness, and a kind word for people are necessary...People are immersed in their work. The lack of information on the vessel makes seamen imbibe any information. They grow with ups and downs (waves). The seamen are like children. They miss care and warmth.

Our contracts are 6-8 months. After four months the psychology of people falters, it becomes difficult. The next 5-6 months they tell you everything, they need to tell you their pain. At the sea you need to listen to the people. It is important not to be estranged from them, to listen to their confession...’

‘Once the owner of the company visited the vessel and I was surprised when he wore the boiler suit and went down to the engine room and he saw the corroded frame and said: ‘I can understand the wear and tear of the engine but how difficult is it to remove the rust?’. I felt shame for the condition of my engine and for this

comment... You cannot feel indifferent towards people with whom you are working and you cannot be indifferent to what you are doing and how you are working. I have been working at sea for 24 years and since 1997 as a chief engineer...'

'People are satisfied and happy when you trust them... When my assistants (the 2<sup>nd</sup> or 3<sup>rd</sup> engineers) have initiative, I leave them to do their work as they know but I always control them. At sea indifferent relationships cannot exist, it is impossible. We need to work in one breath in order to have a 'tuned engine...'

'The vessel is a closed community. It is our home. We care about her (the vessel), we paint and clean it and when it is clean people like it. The vessel becomes warmer when we care about it and we must create the comfort in our environment and we say with pride: 'We made the vessel beautiful'. And when we were asked by the strangers in one of the Ports: 'How old is your vessel?' and we have answered '20 years old' they could not believe it because she (the vessel) was in very good condition and was looking younger...'

'The vessel is our home – 'sweet home'. The crew must understand and respect this... I know that my people like working with me. I am not indifferent to my people and to the work. Work at sea becomes our lifestyle. If you are working hard you have no time to think too much and the time passes easier. If you are relaxed, you miss your family more. After a contract, shore life is completely different. Everything changes. There are different relationships with people.'

As *Captain Kourash* puts it: 'People ask me why at my age I am still working at sea. I tell them that I cannot live the shore life because people here have lost kindness and humanity. I cannot see what is going on here...'

'I remember from my seamen's life the beginning of my career. That time the climate was better. Now it is very difficult. The weather conditions have changed and marine work has become very hard. In the 60's we had stormy weather once or twice in a six-month period. Now every month we have stormy weather. We need to take it into consideration that people get tired and nervous from heavy weather. That's why it is important to have a warm atmosphere on the vessel, to keep balanced and warm relationship between people. Shouting and noise does not help. People must live in a peaceful family...'

### *Being in the same boat*

The most commonly studied aesthetic dimension within organisation studies, *the beautiful* often describes close bonds experienced by organisational members with their work and with people (Strati, 2000). Seafarers will often use the metaphor, *we are all in the same boat* to reference, among other shipboard experiences, the teamwork necessary for safety and survival onboard the vessel. These imaginative stories and their characters are fundamental to grasping the symbolic aspects of shipboard organisational life by evoking the seaman's connection with the sea and his respect for nature. Tragedies at sea have historically created much of the discourse associated with seas, ships and seafarers (Lundy, 2003); thus, the heroic sea rescue renders the aesthetic category of *the tragic*.

As Captain *Golovanov* puts it, 'My first contract as a captain... I remember it as if it was today. We were passing from Belfast to Canada, which was only nine days. As soon as we had passed the Gulf of Mexico the storm 'Isaac' was ran after the vessel. Meteorological reports gave me different information. They directed me to the south in order to avoid the centre of storm. I had no more space to change direction; we were in the centre of the typhoon. The waves were growing and kept strengthening. And the worth that the vessel was not in the right course when the 'ninth bank' was approaching us. I talked to the people from speaker: 'We are turning'. And after few minutes the main engine stopped and the vessel was rudderless, and had only 10-15 minutes of floating. The biggest wave was 14m high. In this situation the difficulty of Captains' position is that you only imagine what can happen and you feel powerless (unequal to such a power). We must not be afraid but must respect the power of nature. When I returned home my wife said that I had more grey hairs...'

As *Captain Savin* said: 'Our work is not easy; it's quite dangerous and stressful. We work at least 12 hours a day and at times even more. At night, the only thing people feel is great tiredness and need to rest. This is our daily routine. Sometimes I try to ease their work schedule so they can rest in between work. We sometimes shift the working time from 8-8 to 6-6 so they can have more free time in the evening.

'Managing a crew is complex. The role of a captain is not only giving an order. A Captain can't be separated from his crew because they all live on the same ship, 24

hours a day in the same closed environment. A crew is usually 15 to 25; we are so few that we are always bumping into each other-everyone knows what is happening to the other. Everything depends on each person's character and from the character of the captain himself-if the captain is a good person then the crew respects him; if he isn't, they don't. And on this relationship depends our productivity. The attitude the crew will have concerning their work depends on the atmosphere created on board by the captain.'

As *Captain Shikin* says: 'I started my marine career 20 years ago and it definitely had a great impact on my life. Nowadays, however, there is less romanticism and more routine. This is because every year we are burdened with new rules and regulations while the previous ones aren't eliminated. Every year the fleet is renewed but the crew size decreases.'

'Concerning human relationships, *we are all in the same boat*. Whether we like it or not, we all depend on each other and we need to help each other in difficult situations. Of course, there is also the daily routine, when there are disagreements between the bridge and the engine department. But in general in the 6 years that I've been in this company, I have never had a situation where the engine department refused to help me when I needed it. For example, although the engine crew has specific tasks, if I need some men to help clean the holds, they never refuse. This is true of the officers and petty officers as well. In general, we never have any major friction...'

'Crews are different and attitudes to work are different. How can a captain influence people to perform better? This is why I like very much working with Russian crews. Because they have the mentality of 'I have to do this; it must be done.' I have worked with Filipino, Hindu and black crews who do not have this mentality. However, if a Russian promises to do the work after a small rest, he will do it, and not just because he trusts the chief officer, but because he realizes the importance of this work; they know that if the ship is delayed, it will affect all of us. Every member of the crew realizes their individual responsibility...'

From the words of *Captain Khromikhin*: 'Our previous owner was a very good man. He was different. He loved us like we were his family, his children. He never gave a command, he always treated us with love. And he talked with captains face to face

and said that we are members of his family. When he visited us on the vessel he talked in a friendly manner to crewmembers, asking them what they do not like and what they would like to improve. Our previous general manager was also an excellent man. He loves very much Russian seamen. He understood the psychology of a seaman. A new general manager is a bureaucrat. His interest is only in paper work...’

***You need to be yourself and let others be themselves***

As *Captain Savin* said: ‘ ‘On board, everyone knows your true face and you know theirs. Even if you wanted to be fake, you couldn’t do it. Everyone knows we do a difficult job and everyone has their own responsibilities, so we know each others’ abilities. A real relationship is greatly appreciated on board; you need to show your true self. The more honest you are, the more you are appreciated. You mustn’t be an artist-you need to be yourself.’

As *Captain Kourash* puts it: ‘For example you give work to your subordinate. It is different if you just give an order and he will do it without giving his full potential, without heart because he is not happy. Under pressure he will not do this work well. But if he knows that his work will be appreciated, he will do this work with enthusiasm and he will be happy. You do not even need to control his work; he will do it very well. It is very important to care about people even if they are in good mood. Every seaman must feel that his work is valued and significant for the crew and he contributes in his part to the whole result. Everyone must feel like that with his work that he is valuable and he is part of a successful team. If this can be achieved then we have a good relationship between people. People must be occupied with good and valuable work. The good food, good relaxation and good discussions also influence and play a role in how people feel. It is also important what they are watching at lunchtime and after dinner. I suggest them to listen to nice music and watch beautiful films. Maybe it is invisible in the beginning but people’s mood changes. People are influenced by what they are watching and hearing. If they watch movies with killing and blood, it creates aggressive emotions. Many things play a role on the vessel. Discussions with people are a very important factor...’

As *Captain Shikin* says: ‘Now, about the relationship between crew members and captain with crew members. We work as a team. If the team works well, then we have good performance. Seamen feel they have responsibilities 24 hours a day in contrast to office workers on land, who at the end of their working day can go to the theatre, cinema, a football game. A seaman has nowhere to go. At any moment he may be faced with an extraordinary situation. The siren might go off at any time and you may need to mobilize people. But by working and living as a team, seamen learn from the marine academy and are tested from their first voyage...’

‘The company policy is very good-the aim is to work as a team and for the crew to be professional and reliable...’

‘Human relations must always be two-sided. People want to get off at a port, to go for a walk and to relax. The crew manager and I try to offer this to them to compensate them for the good work they have done. People know and believe that if they complete the work and the contract effectively, it will also have a positive effect on them- their reputation, future work and promotion. They know that their effort will be appreciated and will not go unnoticed so they will be pleased. It is important for them to work willingly and do their best. And as far as human relationships are concerned, they try to be humane and understanding with their colleagues...’

### *3.3.3 Sense of community at work*

The following quotations illustrate that *emotional relations of seamen define the work relationships*. The ‘authentic’ emotional behaviour of actors fosters a sense of community at work.

As *Oleg Monashev* says: ‘This is a true story. On one of the vessels off of which the Chief was disembarking, and on which I was remaining, when leaving the engine room and saying goodbye to his team, he turned, looked at us with nostalgia, and said: ‘Oh my God, how much work, energy and emotions we have invested in this place. And this is all ours. Honestly, I feel that I am leaving home, ‘my heart bleeds’. I liked his words and as he looked at the engine room, we were in reality one peaceful family. The vessel was our home.’

***'She takes so much energy from me but also gives me so much'***

From the words of *Sergey Novitsky*: 'Of course, it (the engine) is animated. When I come to the engine room I slap on her (main engine) shoulder and say: 'Hello my mammy.' The engine is our fellow. Since now we must live in harmony. And when I am leaving the vessel I always go to the main engine to say: 'Goodbye my dear and thank you for everything. I am leaving for holidays.' She always supports me. The engine is animated for us. She takes so much energy from me but also gives me so much' ...'

As *Chief Engineer Evgeny* puts it, 'Every seaman remembers his years at sea. They are unforgettable. I don't know any seaman who regrets his years at sea-even the difficult ones. It is true that two thirds of our lives are spent at sea-8 months at sea and 3-4 months on land. We live and work at sea.

Today there are new, automated ships but most prefer to work on the old ones, where they have left a piece of themselves. I appreciate and remember all the ships I've worked on, even the oldest and the ones in worst condition. A ship is like a person-it has a soul. Empty ships are like empty homes-without someone living in it. Once, the engine room of the ship I was working on filled with water after a storm and we had to reach a port to disembark. I was full of emotion when I saw the engine room full of water...'

***'At sea we become more sensitive to each other'***

As *Captain Golovanov* says, 'At sea we become more sensitive to each other. The sea sensitises us to our surrounding circumstances, to our fellows, and to our loved ones...Sometimes when a member of crew is disembarking after completion of the contract, when we say goodbye we have tears in eyes, we are all deeply touched...When leaving the vessel I have a feeling that I leave part of myself on the ship.'

As *Captain Savin* says: 'Of course, people can't work without emotion. How can someone do a job they didn't like? If I didn't like my job here, I wouldn't work here. But there are many who work because they need to support their families, whether

they like it or not, and emotion comes second. There are also cases where people don't want changes. In this company I earn less than I could elsewhere but I like it here. I have been many years in this company, 6 years, and I know the company and I trust it. And, of course, I have an emotional bond with my work and the people in it.'

'When we are on land, we feel nostalgic about the sea. I don't know what it is that we miss most-the sea or the work. A seaman has passion and love for the sea and the ship. I often caress the ship and say: "My good, good ship!" There are many stories and sayings that show how superstitious the seamen are. For example, whistling on a ship is not allowed because it is offensive for the ship and it was said to cause a storm. There is a rhyme that says 'if the sun is red at sunset, then a seaman has nothing to worry about'. Another says 'if a seagull sits on the water, then you should expect bad weather'...'

When a ship is old and you know it's its last voyage before going for scrap, it's very hard on you-you have a heavy heart. I will never forget taking my previous ship for scrap. All the crew had disembarked and only four of us remained on it- I, the chief officer, the chief engineer and the fourth engineer. The fourth engineer turned off the last diesel generator. We then lowered the flag and sat for a few minutes in my cabin with our heads lowered, not speaking. We then left the ship and went to our hotel, next to the port. Many got drunk with sorrow that night. The next morning, while leaving, we saw the ship for the last time. Our hearts were heavy with sorrow. This ship had been like our wet nurse. It was very difficult to leave it. We knew every part of it and had had many beautiful voyages on it.'

### *3.3.4 Harmony in the living conditions and in relationships*

These quotations illustrate that harmony is very important to seamen, - ***harmony both in the living conditions and in their relationships.***

#### ***Harmony in the living conditions***

From the words of *Chief Engineer Sergey Novitsky*: 'I understood that happiness is not in money. You were talking about harmony. Before I did not use this word

‘harmony’ in my vocabulary. Really, we need harmony in our surround: harmony in the living conditions and relationship with people.’

‘Of course, it (the engine) is animated. When I come to the engine room I slap on her (main engine) shoulder and say: ‘Hello my mammy.’ The engine is our fellow. Since now we must live in harmony. And when I am leaving the vessel I always go to the main engine to say: ‘Goodbye my dear and thank you for everything. I am leaving for holidays.’ She always supports me. The engine is animated for us. She takes so much energy from me but also gives me so much’...’

‘When engine does not work and you fix and clean it and it works again you feel as you win something, it is rewarding. You made every effort to bring it (the main engine) to life. After that you have more respect to yourself...’

Of course you cannot be in harmony with all people. For example, with Victor Vasilyevitch (crew manager) we are often fighting because he is explosive like me. When something is not fair we react in the same way...’

‘In our country there is no beauty, no harmony. And this is a big problem for people. We cannot sever the link with our mother country. Through our work we are going to our home, to our family. As it says in the song: ‘I am going from you to you’. And this harmony, which we reach on the vessel, in our small community we want to bring it to our country and to our family. When I return to my mother country I want to find the same there. But instead of beauty we meet anger and drunken faces. My wife is warning me: ‘Do not open the door if you do not know who is there’. How we can live without trust. And how can we have harmony if there is no trust between people. I am leaving my country with hard feelings. My friends say that I have everything and I must be happy. I would like to share all that I have if I could make other people happy. I was happy in the past when we knew that if you have a profession you would always find a job. There was stability in our country and people felt safe. Now we are living with memories of the past and unknown future. We want to reach the harmony, the love and the beauty in civilized way, and not through deprivations.

‘The vessel is our home and the crew is our family. I spend half of my life on the vessel. I try to influence people to feel that they are in their home and they must care about it, to make it more beautiful. They must feel like a part of this family, of our small society. We must be sensitive to each other. Sometimes people are very closed in themselves; then we are living as strangers in one family. That’s why we must try

to have harmony in our relationship. In order to achieve harmony of relationship the feeling of responsibility, morality and feeling of beauty are necessary. We need harmony everywhere. At the least, we must strive for beauty and harmony.'

'Maybe the ship could be a good model of harmony and beauty in relationship; and we could transfer this to the offices, to our country and our family. The young cadet who was treated well on the vessel from his colleagues, he will never behave unethically. He conveys positive energy and love for others because these feelings have been cultivated on the vessel. And these feelings are growing and he looks for beauty and harmony everywhere. And I wish this happy end would be true not only in movies but also in reality. We always hope for the better conditions of life for people in our country and everywhere.'

### ***Harmony in their relationships***

As *Captain Khromikhin* puts it: 'We must work in harmony and always find compromises when there is any problem in engine department or on the bridge. In difficult situations I always support my chief engineers and respect their work and they support me too. As one Captain of battle vessel was saying: 'You are nobody without me and I am nobody without you.'

As Chief Engineer *Evgeny Tougoloukov* says: 'The captain and the chief engineer always need to cooperate and to listen to each other – this is very helpful in our work. However, no matter what their relationship is like, the captain remains the captain and a good example for the crew, so the chief engineer must always try to have a harmonious relationship with him.'

As *Captain Kourash* puts it, 'If humanity and feelings work well together this will bring harmony to the work. The captain must be a psychologist. It is his professionalism. He leads people and he must know men...'

As *Captain Savin* said: 'Simply caring about people and human relationships is better than anything else-even giving someone some time to rest if he is tired after a hard day's work. So they can feel comfortable. This gives people the chance to live in harmony. People always understand true caring and appreciate it. They sign

contracts and know their duties and it's up to me to make their lives as pleasant and as comfortable as possible...'

### *3.3.5 Relating through feeling*

In order to give meaning to their lives and work, *people need to have 'real' relationships*: love with pathos, feeling of responsibility for their fellows.

As Captain *Chervanev* says: 'You need to have the inclination to become a seaman. I can only speak for myself and I don't regret becoming a seaman. Of course, I have had periods with ups and downs.'

'People bond with a ship. I have already had 6 contracts with the ship I am going to go on. I have worked with the same crew for 4 contracts. I knew 12 of the 20 crewmembers and all of them have offered something to this ship, painting, decorating the meeting room, hanging a painting on a wall. All these are their creations, and, of course, they will remember this ship.'

From the words of the Captain *Andrey Chernobrovkin*: 'There is a Russian saying: 'some need the whip, others a biscuit'. This means that some people need tight control while others a kind word and inspiration in order to develop and improve. In my experience, people react very well to a simple praise - perhaps because I was lucky. Most crew members progress from this treatment. And I do not do anything - I just encourage them. This holds true not only with Russian crews, which have the same culture, but also with foreign ones, such as the Italian Captain I once worked with. At first, he was very reserved and kept to himself as the rest of the crew were all Russians. However, during a terrible storm, he was surprised by the courage and team work shown by the crew. After that, he expressed his love and admiration for Russian seamen. He then explained to me that he felt this way because he heard different stories about Russian seamen and was reserved with us in the beginning, but later he became friendly and open with the other Officers. He told me that in another storm, with a Filipino crew, he had been left alone on the bridge while the crew hid in their cabins in fear...'

As *Chief Engineer Sergey Novitsky* puts it, 'I love my work very much and respect it. Maybe it is egoistical to say, but my work is the best. Because she (my job) supports me from my childhood and I respect her. I often hear the word 'pathos'. I do not use this word, but my wife tells me that after three month of disembarking period it is a time to go back to the sea. She understands that I miss the sea, my work. And I feel that my soul seeks the sea...'

'I was very proud that I was a seaman. Now I am very proud for my profession as an engineer, and this feeling of satisfaction from my work is very important for me...'

### ***People always support the Captain they love***

As *Captain Savin* says: 'Some people, for example my crew manager, consider me too soft with people, but I manage very well in this way. If a person is worth it, I will do my best to support him. The ideal behaviour on the ship is the humane one. I am in favour of normal human relationship with people-in this way or work is more productive. Yelling and pressure do not achieve anything. Yet I wouldn't say that I have very friendly relationship with the crewmembers and that I can be all day next to them, but I have assistants who communicate with them. The fact that we have 2 coffee breaks-before and after lunch-is beneficial for our relationship, as it gives me the chance to talk with motormen and other crewmembers; this is something I enjoy.'

'People always support the Captain they love and, of course, I in turn support them whenever it is in my hand. There are times when someone may come and say that he cannot go on and wants to go home. I try to encourage them to keep going or joke with them that the ship couldn't survive without them and this makes them feel better. Whenever possible, you need to give them a break...'

'You need to be open with people and to support and encourage them. There has never been a time when someone has refused to do something that I asked them to. Even when they are tired, if something needs to be done, they will do it for me...'

'I believe that the way you treat people is the way they will treat you-it's mutual. If you want them to work hard and with their souls, then you need to create the right conditions and a kind atmosphere on the ship-without tension. Treat people with respect and kindness and you will receive the best results. Show them that you care and they will respect and obey you. Everything is mutual. I have already formed a

reputation in the company and they have told me that people want to work with me again. These men have worked with me before and have had a pleasant journey.'

'I want the men to really get a good rest so that mistakes can be avoided. I tell my assistant that if he is really tired, not to hesitate to wake me up. I have told them they must always tell me if they need a change of shift, because a tired seaman cannot be effective on his shift and must be replaced. If I am tired, I show it to the crew. I don't need to pretend - we are all humans. It's not possible that the captain is rested when the crew is tired. We are like one family...'

'How a contract will go depends to a large degree on how the crew feels and their mood. If they feel strong, they can continue working during the contract. If a person goes to work with a heavy heart, it is not good. Our job is not only physical but a person's psychological well-being is very important as well.'

'Their lives depend on me and I feel that I am responsible for them. It is my responsibility to see that they are healthy and nothing happens to them on board-that they get on and off the ship safe and sound...My responsibilities include providing good food, suitable clothing, making sure they get paid on time so their families can receive it on time.'

'People feel that I care about them and trust me. Sometimes, during a particularly heavy storm, people are under great stress and this can cause panic; if someone starts yelling, it becomes contagious and spreads to the rest of the crew; this can have terrible consequences. This is why the captain needs to keep his calm as much as possible -so he can mobilize the crew. People are sleepless and restless after such a storm.'

### ***Working and living together***

As *Oleg Monashev* puts it, 'Here, in the engine room, human feelings flare up. The work in this area is very difficult and this is not the most important thing. We come down to the engine room in the morning, we work together the whole day and here we live together.'

'It is very hot in the engine room, and when we perform repairs, the chief engineer offers the engine team cold drinks because he cares about us, about his people. This happens in my practice. There were disagreements between the Captain and one of the engineers, during one of which the Chief engineer said to the Captain: 'do not

touch my people. If there are any problems, call me and we can discuss them to see if any staff is at fault. We will then call him and decide if it is necessary to punish him'. After this the engineer said: 'I thought that the Chief was not fair with me. But now, I will go through fire and water for him'.

'On the bridge there are 4 shift deck officers, one after another and the Captain who works alone. For as long as I have been working on board the ship the engine department is always the most united part of the crew. When the Chief engineer comes to the engine room in his white boiler suit and it is reeking with oil, this gives you the feeling that this man does not hesitate to do the work which everyone else does. This makes you respect him more and it does not matter if he was only handing you tools. You can see and understand that he respects your work and he tries to help, he is not indifferent and he supports you even with the small things.'

'Each Captain has many more responsibilities and difficulties on board than any of us but Cotov never shows that he had a difficult time and in spite of this he was always supportive. When you go to him with your problems, let it be economic or daily routine one, you will always receive support and help and already this makes you feel, as people say, 'that you would go to fire and water for this man'. It is his simplicity, his humanity that wins your heart. Looking at him you understand that he is a human as you and immediately he attracts you, and you strive after him...'

As Chief Officer *Alexander Gomzyakov* says: 'The first days on the vessel are always difficult. I am going to the vessel tomorrow and I already feel nostalgia for my family (during the interview Alexander received the message on his mobile from his wife and he was trying to hide his tears).'

'When you stay 8 months on the vessel and you invest so much energy and feelings working under stress, you get close to her (the vessel). Yes, we become sentimental. Many of us may feel shy and they try to hide their sentimentality...These feelings are very delicate... It is very difficult task...'

As Chief Engineer *Evgeny* said: 'The cook has the most difficult profession at sea because he has to please 20 people.

When giving commands, you need to know how to do it so that people can understand. Both sides -commander and subordinate- need to understand each other. There are cases where a commander who dislikes someone constantly makes him

run. We need to correct them but never humiliate them. Even the intonation of a command can play a role. It depends on the situation. In emergencies, commands will be curt while in everyday life they might even be a polite request. You need to be able to assess a situation quickly; you need to be able to understand and work with people – this is very important at sea.’

‘In order to feel comfortable and work without any problems on board, you need to be a specialist at what you do – this is important. When you know, no one can comment on your work. Then, there are human qualities – discipline and character. The most important quality, though, is professionalism. If you do not have a good character, then people will not follow you. There are always 2-3 people on each crew who disrupt the discipline on the ship and they may lead astray other, weaker, crew members. On one trip, we had such a ‘leader disruptor’ whom all the crew rejected and wished he would be fired. But, at sea it’s difficult to let him go. In the end, we let him off at the nearest port. Unfortunately, Russians also like to drink.’

### ***Can we treat machines as having emotions and feelings?***

From the words of Captain *Khromikhin*: ‘It happened in this company. One seaman was looking gloomy by spending hours in the smoking area and no one asks him why he is looking so unhappy and the next morning they found him hanged. It was his first contract on the vessel. Later on we learnt that he had problems with his wife. Others jumped overboard. This is not the only stress that we feel on the vessel. We continuously feel responsibility for everyone. The crew on a tanker vessel can consist of thirty, or twenty-five seamen. And you feel responsible maybe more for their family, for their children and wife than for them personally. There were many accidents where seamen lost their lives or became disabled. If something happens to a seaman, his child and his wife will come and say to me: ‘where is my father? We entrusted him to you.’...’

‘And the most important is that human differs from machine through their emotions and feelings. You feel her when you stay for a long time on the same vessel, you feel her as a part of your body. I gave command: ‘Half board left’. Then I realised that she is very heavy and maybe it is not enough, she cannot turn. Then you touch her and say: ‘Let’s sail, my dear.’

‘We become romantic when we are satisfied with our work and with each other: crew from Captain and Captain from his crew. When everything is going well on loading and discharging port you feel burst of energy. My main purpose is to make people be satisfied with their job and encourage them to feel happy and feel joy in order to leave the vessel with positive memories, with feeling that they learn something new and acquire experience. People who were working with me: officers and crewmembers want to work with me again. I like when people say to the crew manager: ‘Please, send me to the vessel with captain Sergey Khromikhin’. People always appreciate your support and your responsible relationship with them...’

‘I always find time to speak with crewmembers friendly when I am going around the deck. But if it is necessary I give them notice that shortly they must improve their performance. For example, if bread is not baked well, I say to the cook: ‘Try this bread, do you like the taste? Please, the next time do not repeat this mistake.’ The food of seamen must be always tasty and different; because seamen bore with monotony...Usually we have professional cooks. Seamen say that if they are on the vessel with good Captain and good cook they will spend very good time...’

‘I like to work on difficult vessels such as chemical tankers. For example, other captains do not want to stay on these vessels even two month. But I do not like paper work. It takes from me too much time and sometimes I ask chief officer to do this work for me because I feel necessity to communicate with people...’

As Captain *Loushnikov* puts it, ‘A captain cannot and must not be emotional... There are cases where you need to inspire your crew. For example, when we change the cargo from coal to grain, ideally the cargo tanks need to be cleaned thoroughly. However, the men are down and exhausted because they are black from the coal. And there you need to inspire them; your voice needs to be emotionally coloured and to tell them:”I’m here for you!”, “It’s not something difficult!”...Here, the emotions will help inspire the people. If you start by yelling, the people’s spirits will fall.’

As Captain *Kourash* says, ‘Usually the young officers, when they become captains, start to look down on people. A Captain should never see his crew from above. He must show that he can do all kind of work as well as his subordinate does. When the work is done he must be capable of controlling it professionally...’

### 3.3.6 Aesthetics on board

Aesthetic appreciation of the beauty of their surroundings seems enormously important to the seafarers. *Aesthetic of relationship and aesthetic of their working place* certainly seems to be crucial to the lives and experiences of people working at sea.

#### *‘Aesthetics on board must be taught and cultivated’*

From the words of Captain *Chernobrovkin*: ‘Returning to sensible knowledge, the aesthetics on board must be taught and cultivated. For example, a sense of taste can be cultivated if the cook has a smart and neat appearance and the food is well-presented. And although according to marine tradition, officers and crew eat separately, the chief engineer, chief officer or captain always try to be close to the crew by encouraging a tidy appearance and this helps educate people to improve themselves.’

‘As captain, I try to teach the crew to be as well-groomed as possible because affects our reputation and image to any visitor towards our vessel...’

From the words of *Alexandr Beliyayev*: The role of aesthetic in everyday life on the vessel...we always have it in mind, we undermine it but not discuss it. It is difficult to explain. People have different feelings of beauty. One has a more cultivated feeling and another less. People who had never been taught aesthetic may think that aesthetic is unnecessary that there is no need for aesthetic in the work.

As the Chief Officer *Alexander Gomzyakov* says: ‘In my responsibilities is also control of the kitchen. The chief Stuart and cabin boys are not professional waiters. But seamen demand and they know how the table must be served. Maybe we do not have all kind of knives (special for the fish and the meat) as in good restaurants but everything must be clean. If seamen see a dirty fork on the table it can create anger and blow up emotions. This will contradict to the marine traditions. In the restaurant the table must be served by the Stuart. This is not a Russian culture this is a marine culture...’

As Chief Engineer *Vasily Tverdochlebov* said: ‘Once I was called to the vessel where I was shocked to see the aesthetic condition of the engine room and the cabin of the previous chief engineer: all papers thrown around, darkness and a terrible smell in the cabin. When the second engineer saw my reaction he said: ‘do not try, do not make special efforts, everyone is leaving this vessel, no one can survive.’ The vessel at the time was almost not running. I called all the engine team and was forced to replace all engine crew in a two-month period. We made redecorations and repairs to our environments – in the engine room and in our cabins, because we work and live in this environment...’

From the words of Captain *Loushnikov*: ‘Most seamen have a craft - photography, song writing etc. in their free time they work on their craft. Our country is our most precious thing and wherever we are in the world, we always feel nostalgic about it.’

‘Nowadays, all this has ceased to exist. The ships may have women’s names, or names that have meaning for the owner, like ‘Spirit of London’, ‘Mama Mia’, ‘Adriatic Star’ and ‘Legend’. The purpose of the name is to honour the ship. We use this metaphorical relationship everywhere - we have lovingly call our automated navigation system the ‘Asenka’ so she will obey us and be kind to us.’

‘This romantic aspect is slowly being lost from our lives. There is so much information and everything has been transformed so much that there is no room for romance. Our work is always very difficult-loading, discharging, loading, discharging. It’s only when we get back at sea that we can become romantic again. You can’t be a realist all the time-you need to have thoughts and dreams about the future. When you escape the routine, nice thoughts come to you as you listen to music, you draw.’

‘There is a tradition that you never sit with your back to the sea on the ship and when you are on the bridge you must not stand with your back to the wind. This came to us from the time of sailing boats, when the wind moved the ship and when you had your back to it, the wind could die down. This is a superstition, but whenever an assistant on the bridge looks behind rather than to the front I don’t like it and I always make him turn around. When you sit with your back to the water, it shows disrespect and may cause an accident.’

As Captain *Chervanev* puts it, 'We have a big library on board and we owe this to our crew manager, Victor Korobkin and it impresses all visitors. The crew rarely read serious literature; they prefer light reading. Listening to music together is not very popular as everyone has different tastes. Others are on the computer; others watch movies-some of them violent and although our crew manager Victor Korobkin is categorically against this-men at sea should not watch such movies-I have a more democratic opinion that in their free time they should be able to watch what they like...'

### *Aesthetic of their working place*

From the words of *Alexandr Belyayev*: 'There is also technical aesthetic in the work. Engines actually have the same function but the aesthetic experience is different. For example, an engine built in Japan is a piece of art. On the vessel with a Japanese engine you feel comfortable and relaxed and feel proud of working on this vessel. When it is built in Eastern German it is not worth 'spitting at'... The engine has a soul. I say to my subordinates, it is as a slovenly (snotty) child when you do not carry about it. And 'we do not live in a hole'.

As Chief Engineer *Sergey Novitsky* says: 'When you have an opportunity and experience you organise your work with aesthetics...'

'Today, when I have learnt to work with people and become more experienced, I begin to understand that it is a beauty, which is very important in our work and in our life in general, because it helps to organise...May be I use technical terms but it always urge people on thinking about these issues. If you was working with one instrument you must clean and put it accurately on its place in order do not damage it. This is also aesthetic of our work. At each stage of work everything must be done correctly in order to achieve good results.

The officers must be always dressed in white suits. It is very difficult in the engine room to keep clean your white suit. It makes you more responsible and unintentionally you try to work beautifully... We have people who are working fast and people who work slower but they do their work nicely. We always admire things, which are beautiful. This is also in work. I always say: 'when you are

working with machine, take care of it and you will like it when it is repaired and clean, you will respect it more.’

As Captain *Chervanev* puts it, ‘It is my responsibility to check the quality of the food products that come on board. And, of course, a lot depends on how the food is prepared and presented by the cook...’

As Captain *Savin* said: ‘One of the few pleasures on the ship is the good food. The organization of the food is the responsibility of the chief cook- the food must be clean, well-presented and served on time and I need to check that it is so. If we have time, meal times can be a pleasure. I let people sit longer, talk and enjoy their food but for the most part they eat hurriedly as they have to return to their tasks. The dining area must be clean and it should have some plants as they are a pleasure to look at and create a nice environment.’

‘Meals are eaten separately - officers and crew. (This is a marine tradition). This break is usually short as we don’t have much time, but if we do have time I go to the crew and wish them a good meal and ask if they are enjoying it.’

‘Once every contract we have a barbeque and of course not on all ships, only on those with dry cargo and bulkers. When the crew is very tired it is good to do this as it relaxes them. We also celebrate the passing of the Equator, the ancient marine tradition in which a new seaman goes to the God Poseidon and according to mythology is ordained a new seaman with a certificate which states that the man has become a real seaman on that day – the men like to celebrate marine traditions like this one...’

‘If the weather is good with clear skies and a tranquil sea, and, of course, work permitting, we call the cook and the engine team to come on the deck to look at the view- a beautiful sunset or a rainbow. Many seamen have video cameras and like to record such moments.’

### ***Aesthetic of communication***

As Captain *Chernobrovkin* says: ‘I understand the aesthetics of communication as culture of behaviour. This can be taught and cultivated, when you communicate with people through aesthesis...’

From the words of *Alexandr Beliayev*: 'After the working day you try to relax. Some people on the vessel speak to their computer. They give them names of their friends. Another likes to watch movies. These 1,5-2 hours you leave the vessel and sometimes you are fascinated by the plot, the actors and you do not want to come back to reality. Because people need change in their environment and want to see new faces. A closed environment creates inappropriate conditions. On the vessel we live with the same group of people 24 hours in the period of an 8month contract. When we are expecting new member on the vessel, all the crew has an interest for the new seaman at least for one week. He conveys fresh information and keeps the interest of others.'

As Captain *Shikin* says: 'Today, everything is automated and people don't have elementary calculating skills; for any minor thing they need to use the computer. They are so dependent on computers that they can't even communicate without them. But they are stuck on the computer...Of course, there are both positive and negative sides to automation. Young officers play on the computer instead of communicating with each other-most of them may not even know how to communicate. The computer has no feelings or compassion. I can't interfere with their choices-if they prefer to sit in front of the computer, I can't forbid this. There are groups of seamen who gather and play computer games together-this is their hobby. We have few pleasures on a ship-we can play table tennis, read books-we don't have many choices, so if they have found a common interest in computers, you let them do that...'

'Automation is everywhere. Radars today can do everything and some may even recommend the shortest route. Of course, doing this manually requires more time. In my day, we had to solve a case with 5 ships In 5 minutes-to design the route, the speed and course of each ship. We had to calculate the real speed and not the relative speed. This wasn't difficult for us then because we only needed logic and orientation-what a true navigator must have. Nowadays, the radar is everything.'

'Captains are taught to be navigators. The new generation of captains can't do anything without computers. The computer is something which limits your ability to think. Today, everything is automated and people don't have elementary calculating skills; for any minor thing they need to use the computer. They are so dependent on computers that they can't even communicate without them. Of course,

in critical situations, it's the person who makes the decision, not the computer; this is why I tell them to do the calculations by hand and then verify the answer on the computer. But they are stuck on the computer.'

The aesthetic category of the gracious refers to the quality of organisational life that comes from the experience of visual and aural elegance or charm (Strati, 2000). Technological advances in shipping also led to a reduction in the number of crew necessary to bring a ship safely to its destinations (Sekula, 1995). For the seaman, this sounded the 'death knell' in the 'art of seafaring'. Thus technological advances in shipbuilding design, work automation and telecommunication systems have contributed to corresponding changes in the craft of seafaring in the seaman's perceived absence of grace.

From the words of Captain *Loushnikov*: 'Nowadays, our work is very difficult and hard. We are constantly loading and discharging. The men do not even have time to communicate with each other and often forget what day or time it is. Our bosses are only interested in business and I cannot disobey them. I like having free time, listening to music and reading a good book and I would like to give the crew more free time but it is not within my power to do so.'

'Nowadays people are too busy to communicate. When we cross the Equator, we celebrate this event; I have done so at least 50 times. This time, all the people prepared so much for it, they even prepared dress-up costumes, but the company suddenly changed the route and everything was forgotten. Instead of that, we had an 'Evening of Memories'. In this celebration, we gave each man a nickname and these names stayed with them. This event is dedicated to the sea and the seamen. Unfortunately, there aren't many such traditions left. We also celebrate the men's birthdays-the cook bakes a cake to honour the seaman.'

### ***'Even a dog likes a good word'***

From the words of *Oleg Monashev*: 'My first contract in this company was extended to 10 months. The crew was so good, so close to each other, everyone helped and cared for each other that I did not understand how time passed so fast. Work was work, but we had also rest. I could not imagine that it would be possible in a western

shipping company to have a Captain and chief engineer, and all crew as a one family. Everyone was kind to you, discussed things with you. This was very pleasing...'

'If the Captain or Chief engineer does not properly treat their crew, people will try to avoid them, they will just execute their orders, but they will not see a leader in their face. Then they will look for a leader in someone else from the crew. There are always one or two people after whom people strive regardless of their position. Of course, the ideal is for Captain to be the leader of his crew...'

'Kind word from the Captain and Chief engineer... It all depends on how this word has been said. For example, for me, with kind word, as the saying goes, 'I am ready to climb a mountain'. Sometimes I was supported by the Captain and by the Chief, but there were times when the opposite happened when in the end I was right, but I heard many harsh words and faced indecent, improper behaviour from my boss which hurt me very much. And when from the company the answer was that your electrician was right, the answer from the side of Captain and Chief was simply silence.

As a human, all I want is for him to simply say 'Yes, Oleg, you were right.' I do not want you to say sorry, I know where your position is and where mine is, but I have heard so much from you, and it was not fair and even now you do not want to acknowledge my rightness. Sometimes a kind word is more valuable, it means more than thousands of dollars. To acknowledge his fault, a person needs guts.'

'As the saying goes, 'Even a dog likes a good word'. When in the work you fix some damage, you are already satisfied with the result of your work, but money is not so important as the chief engineer or Captain saying 'well done'. It is a pleasure when your boss acknowledges your work. It seems that you are already mature and you have seen so much in your life but after hearing good words you feel very good and a warmth in your heart and your respect for this person (meaning the chief or captain) grows and even if later on something goes wrong, you will forgive him; even if he is not fair with you, you will always find an excuse for him: 'maybe he was tired, or he has some problems, maybe he was nervous for some reason'. It has happened to me in my practice. I was suffering the dignity from Captain, who besides me with anger and I was proving my right professionally. I had reached the end, and I had decided to prepare my suitcase to leave the vessel at the next port because the request was standing very seriously for me. The Chief engineer for 1

hour was defending me to the Captain, because they can speak from the same position. And for the first time in my life, the Captain came to me and apologised for being angry with me and for his harsh words. I was shocked by this, up to then I thought bad things about him but after that I was worked 2 contracts with this Captain. He is a wonderful man...'

***'We are rude and sentimental seamen'***

As the Chief Officer *Alexander Gomzyakov* says: 'All aesthetic of our relationship is formulated from the specifics of our work. Yes, people are tired now, but in the end the preparation of the tanks in time will be valued. And all crew must understand that we are working towards it. During the process they can free their emotions, can fight, but we have instructions...'

'We are demanding and trying to create beauty in our surroundings. If people cannot be changed, you need to remind them every time and finally you give order, because you need to keep the discipline. Each crew member has a different cabin. One creates comfortable cabin and the other's cabin is scattered. And in this case the advice is simple: Mr... tomorrow morning everything must be in order...'

'There must be trust and fairness. Sometimes crew members think that their boss was not fair with them. But there are also other opinions. We have meetings. I do not remember if we were discussing aesthetic but sometimes if some of the crew member was harsh with others, we discuss his behaviour. And we do not wait for special meetings, we discuss it immediately.'

'We need to pay attention and see the beauty in our surroundings. It is necessary for us. Very often we become more sentimental than we are usually at shore. Now many of us are fascinated with making a video film. One started and the others got carried away. They bought cameras and tape from each other and did editing. And when a crewmember said: 'What are you taping 10 min. the sea, the pitching and rolling from the waves.' They made jokes and answered: 'I want my wife to know how difficult it is for me. And she will love me more.' We are rude and sentimental seamen who can also abuse each other. If politeness is not false (it is natural) then it is accepted and is pleasing. But when I say 'please' it means order not request. When you are in the higher position you must be firm.'

‘Sometimes my subordinates say: ‘When you gave instruction your tone, your intonation was...very angry, not kind.’ I could not understand how my intonation was, because I did not even pay attention to it. But he (crew member), I don’t know why, paid close attention to my tone of giving instructions. He was under stress and he started to think: ‘Because he talked to me like this, he does not treat me well and he does not like me.’ And this is only because he did not like my tone. And sometimes when I speak a loud, he (subordinate) thinks that am I shouting at him.

### ***The intonation is an art of command***

The intonation is an art, and you need to learn how to manipulate it. There are no special courses about aesthetic that’s why we learn it on an emotional level. This is just your manner, your way of doing things, your behaviour, because I cannot do it in another way. Of course, I do not want to be rough, and I would not like my subordinates to think about me as rough, cruel in treating them. But I prefer to be tough in commanding. For me, tough command is strict and definite, clear in time, it is not loose command, it is solid. And in work, when you have contact, it all goes smoothly. Sometimes you need to simply explain, because as Porthos (from ‘Three musketeers’): ‘I am fighting because I am fighting.’ If man has lost the responsibility then it can rise in savage and he will become not rough but cruel...’

‘Let’s return to the aesthetic. If the Captain on the bridge looks well and is well spoken then people strive after him. And we must try not to damage this image with our look. If the Captain knows that he has support from the chief officer and the chief engineer; when he has some difficulties with the language, he knows that they will help him and will not leave him alone and his crew will support him...’

As Captain *Khromikhin* says: ‘I also worked with international crew. But independently of culture and nationality it is not so important what Captain says, or Chief Officer, or Chief engineer (your boss) but how he says it. His intonation is very important. I never understood that way of talking with seaman: ‘Hey, seaman, come here.’ You must know all your crew by names if you expect people’s respect. It is even desirable to call them by their father’s name. In our Russian tradition when we call people, for example, Sergey Nikolaevitch it shows your respect to this person. And independently from his age, and his position, instead of calling: ‘Hey,

student, come here', as many commanders usually do, to say: 'Sergey Petrovitch, please you must pay more attention to this or...'

'Our seamen are lazy, including me. For example, they go to dinner after working day. They wash their hands and face, but stay in dirty dungarees. I strongly require changing their working suit in order to feel beautiful themselves and to please others who are sitting next to them. Of course, I hear different excuses that they had no time because they had too much work. But I teach them that it is very important to go to dinner looking nice and clean, by doing this they show their respect to others...'

'Many of the seamen are artists. I know many officers who play the piano or the guitar. I know very well ballroom dancing. In Marine Academy we had lessons twice a week...'

### ***'Captains who write poetry, compose music or paint'***

As Chief Engineer *Evgeny* puts it, 'I know captains who write poetry, compose music or paint very well. However, in order to do these you need free time. You cannot leave the work behind to write poetry – you need free time. In the past, when we were at sea, the captain had free time to enjoy his art. There are talented captains... Family plays an important role in a person's aesthetic development. And what he gains from his family helps him in his professional development. Because at sea you are in a closed environment, what we bring from our families we can expand on. Sometimes, I may ask a motorman something which he might know better. We must try to have better relationships. For example, the new coffee time we have is a very good idea because even 15 minutes of communication twice a day are very helpful as the crew can converse, and tell stories, which helps release the stress.'

'During their breaks, at times, we organise barbecues, poetry evenings and in this way they have 3-4 hours to communicate with each other. If people like each other then they work better and as a team...'

We work with Russian crews and we understand each other because we speak the same language, have similar cultures and the same lifestyle. People who work with international crews say that there are times when they face difficulties...'

As Chief Engineer *Vasily Tverdochlebov* said: ‘Usually at sea people are fair to each other. If people have complaints about somebody, then it means that the person is really not faithful and tries to avoid work. The chief engineer and the captain are always discussing all the problems of the vessel. The routine work is carried out by their subordinates. On the vessel the hierarchy demands keeping distance between officers and the crew.

Fifteen minutes of coffee time plays a significant role. This is the time when all things are discussed by crewmembers. Here is a closed chain. I say to my people: ‘I am your chief engineer but I cannot succeed without your support. The company demands from me and I require your support.’

‘People observe you, your behaviour and they appraise it. It will be easier to cooperate in the future if you collect more positive marks from the beginning. Then, aesthetic relationship builds up normally...’

As Captain *Savin* said: ‘The aesthetics of relationships...People need to feel satisfied. People with similar interests group together. It is very positive that Russian seamen like to read books. Of course, everything depends on their education and upbringing. It’s very pleasant to meet again people with whom I worked well. A seaman always develops professionally and emotionally at sea. There is a saying that a trip went by “like your soul singing”- in a breath – very quickly because everything went smoothly. In reality, most of our life is spent at sea. I am so organized in my mind that I sometimes feel like a mechanism. Perhaps I am not expressing myself correctly but this is how I feel.’

### ***‘Seamen are romantic and sentimental people’***

These imaginative stories and their characters are fundamental to grasping the symbolic aspects of shipboard organisational life by evoking the seaman’s connection with the sea and his respect for nature.

As Captain *Golovanov* puts it, ‘The work of crewmembers is very hard. Depending on the plans of the company, I demand strict completion of the work. People who have worked with me know this...People know my requirements regarding their personal behaviour and ethics. But they also know that I always call their attention

to the beauty of the nature surrounding us. It can be a school of dolphins playing with a vessel or when a whale following the ship turns on its side and wagging with flipper then tries again to catch up with the vessel by saluting us and playing with us, and doing it again and again...And when after the rain a huge rainbow appears above the sea, it seems like the ship is entering the arch. By marine tradition a seaman must make a wish and his wish will come true. All this relaxes people from work. We have very intensive working hours and sometimes there is no time even to think about aesthetics. But if it is possible after working hours we organise events which help people have a break...For example, when we are passing the Equator we have an ancient tradition of ordaining a seaman. One of the seamen dresses as the god Poseidon and comes to the Captain and we perform speeches from mythology... People like to celebrate marine traditions...'

'Seamen are romantic and sentimental people...I was trying to photograph with a camera a sunset at sea, but maybe there are not yet cameras that can capture the beauty that only a seaman can see. The sea can be stormy or calm but when it is stormy the sun takes the most amazing outlines. It can look like a hedgehog and anything else you can imagine. Have you seen green clouds? It's when the sun's rays illuminate the sea by colouring the clouds in green. You cannot imagine this beauty and the sensation, the feeling it arouses. But how can these feelings influence people?'

'The seaman cultivates his aesthetic perception by travelling from very young age. I was also influenced by the stories about Captain Nemo. There are personalities from whom I would like to learn, but I cannot remember a Captain, who could be my role model. It is difficult to model a Captain on my ideal. I try not to make the mistakes which I have seen in other Captains. But sometimes I am obliged to use very strict methods of command where there is no space for aesthetics...'

'The crew looks at how the Captain reacts in crisis situations: in stormy weather and during periods of inspection. And then they evaluate the Captain - how he looks after wakeful and difficult nights (and even how he smells). When the journey is long we do not see land for forty days. And it is very difficult to watch continuously the sea ...'

As Chief Engineer *Sergey Novitsky* says: 'Of course, when alarms are screaming and the vessel is rolling and pitching you cannot be romantic. But sometimes (rarely)

when we are free from work we go to the bridge and look at the horizon, on the stars at night. It is pleasant to talk about aesthetics. I think it is something that we forgot but it is our future. Unfortunately life becomes cruel (severe). People put first importance on the material goods. They work together but they are aggressive and angry. In my present company the stability and general climate somehow smooth out this anger. In previous companies I felt this anger from others. Instability, low salaries and old vessels make people feel that nothing cannot be fixed and changed. People were depressed. This situation of moral pressure, especially for seamen who saw their families suffering and they were unable to help them - they start to drink alcohol. Fortunately we have passed that period...'

### *3.3.7 Why the aesthetic experiences are pleasurable and valuable for seamen*

As illustrated in the words of seamen in order to translate the potential benefits of our sensory equipment into actuality, the senses must be cultivated and disciplined. According to this view, objective standards such as money are illusory, because they do not directly affect how we feel; in comparison with them, experiences are real. By this measure, *aesthetic experiences are more important than supposedly objective experiences.*

#### *On the wings of the aesthetic*

As Chief Engineer *Alexander Beliayev* puts it, 'Aesthetic helps and aesthetic elevates you and helps you go far in the world. In our work, without discussing aesthetic we undermine the aesthetic issues and we use our aesthetic knowledge to understand and influence people.'

As *Oleg Monashev* says, 'As people say, 'beauty will save humanity'. Seeing the beautiful things in your surroundings, being in touch with this beauty can change your outlook on other things. The more beautiful things, images, you have received in your life, from your childhood, the easier it is to live with this in the future...And in your work, if the Captain and Chief engineer treat you well, they can influence

you; you become a better person after that contract. It happened with one of my friends. After one contract, where the Captain and others were very polite and kind to him, he developed aesthetically, he became more polite with his family, he changed his manners and I was surprised and pleased when I saw these changes.'

'I like a storm at sea...Yes, there is rolling and pitching and even the most experienced and strong seamen suffer from harsh weather. But I like stormy sea. It is wonderful. The stormy sea has magnificence. I look for beauty in my surroundings because it is important to feel not like a machine earning money but to see and enjoy the beauty around us...'

'My work gives me a lot, means a lot for my emotional life...I like to look at the waves and to listen to the roaring of the sea...the daily routine makes you feel like a machine. When you are at sea and you stay far from your family they become closer and more valuable to you, you understand how much they mean to you. The beauty gives people sense of sublime...'

'Yes, we are working for money. When you are in working place the stimulus is a normal human treatment and human relationship, that's it, you do not need nothing else. That is as in good, peaceful family... feelings and emotional satisfaction are more important than material ones...'

### ***Aesthetic relationships***

'Sometimes people do not understand the word Aesthetic. The meaning of the aesthetics of a relationship is not conceivable. This is not a usual word for me either. To my understanding it means correct and proper relationships, respect not only for yourself but also for others, and the attempt to make communications pleasurable for each party. This is my understanding. You can try through your relationships, your manner and your behaviour, as well as with your word and tone, which could dictate a prepossessing appearance to others. When you meet new people, you listen firstly to their manner of speaking. Then you can see and understand their relationship to you...you then build your future relationship with this person...However, due to a certain current tendency by individuals to be withdrawn, it is difficult to open up their souls and verbalise their thoughts. Because, nowadays, to make someone talk, you need to awaken...their consciousness...'

From the words of the Captain *Andrey Chernobrovkin*: ‘I understand the aesthetics of communication as culture of behavior. This can be taught and cultivated. When you communicate with people through aesthesis...By explaining your actions and through examples, you can influence people. Practical knowledge is more comprehensible to people. If the captain has a positive image, then people will follow him. If he sees that his crewmembers develop individually, then the crew as a whole progresses. Believing in people is also a characteristic of a leader. Without this belief, you are nothing at sea. I have seen men of not very good character become better people during the contract. If someone does not have the will to change, then they will not develop. Only with kindness can you influence and change them. It is a captain’s duty to create a positive atmosphere on the vessel.’

As Captain *Kourash* says, ‘When people are happy they perform much better...If we cultivate good habits by changing the bad ones it also has aesthetic value. By trying to improve something for the better people do not even understand how this change happened. By explaining to them that some habits are not good for their health on my last contract three seamen quit smoking. Aesthetics is also to respect others. The captain must observe and see his people’s habits and if it is possible to change or to improve them for the better. Some seamen change their habits during contract. It is also aesthetic knowledge, which can be learned...’

From the words of Chief Engineer *Peter Covsh*: ‘In the beginning of the contract people complain that they are tired when you pressure them. But later on they immerse themselves in the work. Sometimes in the engine room we work without having a break if the situation demands it. People understand that we cannot avoid this work and they do not complain. In difficult situations people trust you and everyone strives after you and carries out to fulfil your work requirements. People like to be the part of succeeding team...’

As Chief Engineer *Sergey Novitsky* says: ‘In order to increase productivity of our work we must praise people for the good job. There are some commanders, which think that he did his work, because he must do so. But it is always pleasure for the people to be noticed for the good completion of their work and next time he will think that he is a capable and he will try to do his job better. By praising people you

prompt them to development. But if you say that what ever he is doing is wrong then he has this negative feeling, which does not help him to develop. And in this way the feeling of responsibility and love for the work cannot be cultivated. After saying ‘well-done’ and praising people they want to hear it again...’

‘Of course, when alarms are screaming and the vessel is rolling and pitching you cannot be romantic. But sometimes (rarely) when we are free from work we go to the bridge and look at the horizon, on the stars at night. It is pleasant to talk about aesthetics. I think it is something that we forgot but it is our future...’

### *3.3.8 Knowing through feeling*

*Aesthetic knowledge* based on the emotional and often sentimental responses *convey the sense of their feelings.*

#### *Getting a feeling for what matters to your people*

From the words of Captain *Andrey Chernobrovkin*: ‘There are captains who have no direct communication with their people, but only through their chief officer. The seamen feel disheartened when the captain is distant. Many marine songs refer to the crew as a family, but sometimes this is only true in theory.

People are different. For example, when a Captain goes on a new ship, he must let some time pass in order to get to know the crew. He is first of all interested in the quality of professionalism of his officers. When he calls his officers to a meeting and starts asking direct questions about their professional skills, they are reserved and apprehensive in front of the new Captain. People want a different approach. Sometimes dialogue and discussion are necessary in order for them to open up and become more sincere, thus allowing the Captain to understand them...’

‘A Captain must feel his people. Seamen always need to feel that you care about them, you ask about their wife, their children. Remembering details like their children’s names makes the crew feel that you are interested in them. There are examples of captains who do not want to directly communicate or see their people but leave it up to their Chief officers or Chief engineers. I cannot understand this kind of behaviour. How will they be able to trust their crew? At sea, there are so

many crisis situations when they will need to save their cargo, their ship or even people's lives. Who will support or follow this kind of captain? How can you reach your goals when your crew has negative feelings towards you?'

'In practice, it is obvious that emotions are the most effective tool in persuading them. For example, I prepare the vessel for inspection. I have found that it is not effective to follow every crewmember, telling them what to do and correcting them, as each one has their own duties and responsibilities. Whatever depends on me-like explaining to them - I do. But there is always the human factor. Before every inspection, I have a meeting with all the crew where I focus on our goals and targets and I remind them that on this inspection depends not only the owner's satisfaction but also our jobs and reputation. I emphasize that the inspection is for our own good and safety and when I do this, I see in their eyes that we understand each other, we are communicating.

And this knowledge of good communication comes with practice and life experience. I didn't learn it on any course. I lived the experience of becoming a captain – I worked under different captains, some I liked, some I didn't. One gains this knowledge from real-life situations, what he lived through in order to become a captain, to get to the helm.'

'I try to teach my assistant officers (first-fourth) how to become leaders. But this comes with maturity and depends on individual characters of the officers. One may become a good captain while another never will.'

'There are different kinds of leaders: leaders by position and those who were born to be leaders. Two people can be in the same position, but one is a leader and the other just an administrator. The ability to admit that you don't know something or that you lack experience in something is another positive quality of a person...'

As Captain *Chervanev* puts it, 'In different cultures, people react and express their feelings differently. Nowadays, our Chief Officers and Captains are invited to the company's offices in Greece for an interview before going to the vessel. For example, today I was asked "why Russians behave in this way". A captain must understand his men and behave accordingly. Unfortunately, you cannot treat everyone in the same way. The relationship must remain "normal" but you cannot always achieve this. This relationship must be achieved by both sides-seamen must know why they came to the vessel...'

***‘One gains this knowledge from real-life situations’***

As Captain *Savin* puts it, ‘But at the end of a contract, when they (my crew) express their pleasure at working with me and their desire to work with me again, I feel great satisfaction because it shows that I am on the right path. This emotion goes both ways because I have had good experiences with them too.’

‘I consider myself a fair person. If I respect my crew, they will respect me. It’s my principle never to punish someone before I hear their side and give them another chance-I have seen that this works. If the same person is involved in another situation where he is to blame for a professional or behavioural error, then measures need to be taken. I am not talking about the working relationships among all the crew because there are rules and regulations for working relationships...’

‘I believe I can give strict orders, I can ask politely and even give them my wishes! When I give them a polite order, they feel good and do their work more eagerly.’

‘People don’t like being let down. If you have promised them something, you must keep your word. Sometimes, when one of two crewmembers needs to leave, it is very difficult for the captain to make that decision...’

‘I think it is best to listen to people; I always want to investigate a situation myself. The men know that I encourage them to be open and express themselves. I know most of my crew, so I can approach them and ask them how they’re feeling, how the work is going. I know and understand that after 12 hours of hard work, you need to give them a chance to rest. If they are rested, then the following day they will be more productive and with renewed energy...’

‘When new cadets come on board for the first time, they are always teased and tested by the older crew to see how they react and we can get to know them—like a test.’

From the words of Captain *Loushnikov*: ‘... our job is very difficult and demanding. Seamen need to be ready for any unexpected situation...First of all, a seaman needs to have resistance to difficult situations and patience. These are qualities necessary for a seaman because life on land is calmer and more of a routine without many unexpected events while on a ship the sea is unpredictable—from one moment to the next it turns from calm to stormy. This affects our mood. The sea is beautiful when seen from land—with different colours. You can sit and admire it. However, it’s a

different picture from the deck...The sea might be calm and the sun may be shining in the morning and in a few hours the weather may change and the ship may start rolling and pitching-if you are on land, you simply go home but a seaman has nowhere to go.'

'Another important quality for a seaman is the ability to co-exist with others. On land a man is different to how he is at sea. When he finds himself in a small community on a ship, if he has bad habits, he can't co-exist. When you are with others in confined space and everyone is close to each other, you need to behave according to the situation and common rules as a Russian saying goes: "You cannot go with your own Bible to another monastery". And this is a very important and strict rule. A trouble-maker cannot survive in a seamen's community. Such a trouble-maker on land can leave and go home while at sea he will create a negative atmosphere which will continue to grow until it affects the rest of the crew. The crew must live harmoniously.'

'Another very important quality for a seaman is love of his profession. If you have all the above qualities, you must complete with love for this profession. All professions have their good and bad points, but you must always test yourself to the bad points in order to see if you are suited for this job. You always choose a profession for its good points but in practice you are faced with the bad ones.

A further quality necessary for a seaman is romanticism. A seaman always wants to experience something new and interesting. He wants to live new experiences and relationships. It's more than romanticism, it borders risk. It's like gambling-there's risk and passion. You always wonder what else there is. We all know there are danger- storms, difficult situations, and physical problems. One must always be alert at sea.'

### ***The knowledge of a captain is experiential***

From the words of Captain *Loushnikov*: 'You need to have a very deep knowledge and understanding of your men. It is an art being able to recognize the person standing in front of you and his potential. The crew is made up of different people-different education, with technical skills, without skills. You need to have a 'formula' for each one separately. The relationship and understanding with officers is on a different level. I always know who is standing in front of me and his

potential. You can't show great familiarity but at the same time you can't act like a king. And this is an art. You must never show the crew that you are fallible.'

'Everything depends on the individual character of the person. You live and learn by comparing... You listen and you look and you slowly begin to shape your thoughts- what you want- and to test yourself.'

'I rely only on my experience, on what I know. I have gained this experience from practice and from books. The knowledge of a captain is collected. We learn from our mistakes; from trial and error. You can't find everything in a captain. Every captain has made mistakes but with trial and error we eliminate the mistakes and gain collective experience...Whenever you say 'in my experience', it sounds very authoritative. You shouldn't suppress fresh, new ideas because when you tell them 'in my experience' they may lose their initiative. You need to let them ask you, to teach them through their own initiative.'

'A good leader requires a combination of elements which are inter-related; without one element you cannot reach the other because you will not have the chain. Every element is significant. For example, if you have work experience which you gained through your feelings and if your ability to make decisions is based on self sense, this is art. This is a circle of abilities. This is a seaman's life. We don't have priorities; everything is a circle of abilities and everything depends on real-life situations. If a ship is in danger of sinking, what matters is: if it is day or night, summer or winter, how big the crew is, if the sea is calm or stormy. There is no set recipe. It all depends on the circumstances...The ship is never to blame, the mistakes are human. A ship never sinks by herself-there's always human error involved...'

'The sea is not a stable element; we need to be prepared for anything-accidents, storms. In such situations if someone panics, he passes it on to the rest of the crew. If you have a 'God' captain, there is no understanding or communication between them. They can't trust me blindly but they must believe in me. There must be two-way communication. When there is team work and an experienced captain, you can easily find a solution. When the moment for decision-making comes, I make it. When you don't have experience, more mistakes will be made. I discuss with my chief officer and chief engineer extreme situations-fires, storms and accidents- and the final decision can prove fatal. Out of three solutions, only one may be correct and you need to find it.'

‘Sometimes, a captain can be an artist but never a clown. At times you need to be able to support and at others inspire...When I see my men sad, I know they are having problems with their family. When you are at sea, you leave your family behind and this hurts. If a family is close and tight, then everything goes well and their loving wife and friends wait for him. However, if he hasn’t heard from his family in a while or left his family with problems, then he carries these negative feelings with him. A captain must recognize the situation and try to decrease the negativity of the situation or accentuate the positive. Very often, this plays a role because he may be a good worker but this affects his work. If you inspire him, he will work better...You try to lift your men’s spirits so they will work more and better. And this is where the art of manipulation comes in...’

‘In critical situations, your decisiveness plays a major role. I’m not a king or God; I also feel down but no one must see or understand it. In such situations, after I give my command, I go to my room and there let my emotions show, even cry, but always in secret. But all this later, after the crisis...The crew understands that the captain is also human and needs help-the work must be done.

### ***‘Winning manners of real leaders’***

As *Oleg Monashev* puts it, ‘... at work when it is needed I work hard and the chief engineer sees how I work. But, give me a chance to have a rest, when there is no real work. I am not a robot; I cannot keep on working without stopping. Like all normal people I also need rest. When the Chief engineer says: ‘Are you tired?’ and you answer: ‘yes, I am tired’ he says: ‘Ou~...’This also shows that he does not see you as a human being.’

‘On the vessel we are in isolated space and if conflict arises then the tense atmosphere creates strained relations. I have a lower rank and I can see between different layers...I was working with captain Cotov; it was a very hard (from the aspect of work) contract. Till now I remember with pleasure the time when I was working with him. He is a very correct and very polite man. As the saying goes, sometimes you need to show that you did not see that someone made small mistake. He is this kind of Captain. He will make-believe that he did not see but you as an adult, will feel ashamed that you bring this kind of man in difficult situation and

only this plays a very important role in the process of education. From his human relationship you learn very much...’

‘If one before giving order makes it clear what he wants, and explains or when a subordinate makes a mistake he tries to help, correct, or remind him – this is definitely a leader. Why? Because people will follow him and will not be afraid to tell him their problems and to admit their mistakes. People understand their fault and they know that after scolding there will be help and teaching – these are winning manners of real leaders’.

‘Not everyone can become Captain. When I trust a Captain, I place my life and my family’s life in his hands.’

As Chief Engineer *Sergey Novitsky* says, ‘I have the same feeling about responsibility and beauty. For me responsibility and beauty is the same thing. In the beginning, when I was younger maybe feeling of responsibility was stronger because I was trying to prove that I can do my work well in order to be promoted. But when you are expecting people’s recognition you try to do your work beautifully. All these are interrelated. The more you understand, the more you realise that you must do everything nicely...’

As Captain *Golovanov* puts it, ‘My people knew that under my calmness I always had a readiness to mobilise people and I feel confident that people will follow me. People trust me, and they know that my demands and strictness have a basis. I try to always be fair with my crew. Sometimes I feel that I educate children, which need professional and moral support. Unfortunately there is a saying among seamen: ‘If you do not know we will teach you, if you don’t want we will oblige you’. Otherwise the seaman will travel just as a passenger, till the next port of his disembarking...’

From the words of Captain *Sergey Khromikhin*: ‘Usually in the first four months the crew is very happy, everything goes well and without any problem. They understand you from the first glance. As soon as my officers see that I am going upstairs to the bridge, I do not need to tell them anything. Chief Officer already knows what he must do. He contacts with boatswain and all works goes well. One of my Chief Officers was saying: ‘Our captain is strict but fair’...’

As Chief Engineer *Evgeny* says: ‘Everything depends on the example that the leaders on the ship set. This is very difficult - you can’t please everyone. Those who are reserved find it more difficult at sea than open, happy people, who are much more pleasant to work with. Ten days is enough time to see how good a seaman is - how he behaves when he works and towards other people.’

‘We go out to sea with the aim of returning. We go out to sea to earn a living. Man changes at sea – he returns a different person. Leaders can instil in sailors a love for the work. The cadets come out of the academy with theoretical knowledge of navigation. However, when they come to the ship, you need to teach and show them in practice. In this way, the young cadets begin to develop professionally. At first sight you know who has absorbed your advice... There are cases where a cadet did not do very well in the academy but in practice, on the ship, they become good seamen.’

### *3.3.9 Aesthetic judgments and issues of ethics and social power*

The following quotations illustrate that for seamen ***relational communications are linked with the most important issues of social power and ethical issues***. Seafarers link beauty with their feelings. They identify their feelings with aesthetic categories. For example, they link a feeling of responsibility with beauty. Unethical behaviour is ugly and unacceptable for seamen.

#### ***‘The feeling of responsibility is a beautiful feeling’***

As Chief Engineer *Sergey Novitsky* says:.. All these issues of culture, discipline and morality, ethics and aesthetics, and beauty are interrelated. A crew of seamen are close to each other. Each act of the seaman is related to others. If other members of crew snubbed a seaman he cannot overcome it easily as he could do in shore life by meeting his family, or friends. We are living together; we are eating and sleeping and working together and not only for one or two days but months.

***'It is painful when somebody hurts you'***

As Chief Engineer *Sergey Novitsky* puts it, 'In our small community people who are able to act immorally and in an ugly way cannot stay for a long time, they cannot survive. The other members of crew will try all possible ways to turn him away or we call to crew manager and inform him that this person creates problems among crew. It is painful when somebody hurts you. And I try to put an end from the beginning...If there was crack in the relationship we must stop it, as we say technically: to drill the crack in order to stop it in the beginning. We must understand the core of the problem. Sometimes it can be just misunderstanding. In this case I talk to each person separately and try to explain to him how his act can affect the moral climate between members of crew. It is very important to have a positive moral climate on the vessel. If there is some unpleasantness it will affect everything: our work and beauty of our relationship, our existence as a whole. The moral acts are always beautiful and unmoral are always ugly. People must be aesthetes in their soul. External beauty is not real... We learn each other very soon, because we are together twenty-four hours. But the whole climate on the vessel comes from a Captain. He has all authority; all lines are going through him. The moral and aesthetic climate of the vessel depends on the morality and aesthetics of the Captain...'

'I have been working in Marine since 1972 (already 34 years). When I was starting, those years we had no time to think about aesthetic, and about beauty. We were working in our own Soviet country where everything was planned and you should not think about anything. It was aesthetically wrong to be noted for your witness. It was politically wrong to think in different way and if anyone was standing out for his originality, very soon he was isolated...'

'This is a Russian stereotype from the past. We were educated in the spirit of sacrificing our life for our job. Today the word 'you must' sounds different; its meaning becomes wider. I have a different feeling, that I must do this work by thinking not only about myself but also about others. I am working in this company already six contracts and my thoughts are wider...I feel responsible for all my team, even for all ship (crew).'

'From the past we had a division of the vessel's crew on two departments but now it is invisible. I always teach my people that it is not right to divide a crew into bridge

and engine departments. Although I am responsible for the engine department, but all work and function of my department depends from the bridge and the other way around. The vessel cannot be divided on engine and bridge departments; it is a whole, embodied organism...There is an expression of seamen that the engine is a heart of the ship. But a heart cannot work without a brain. Everything on the vessel is interrelated.'

'Today our work is engaged with the work of the Captains. Honestly, I am sorry about Captains. Regarding to the new regulations their work has changed. They have too much paper work.'

### ***Aesthetic climate of the vessel depends on the morality and aesthetics of the Captain***

From the words of Captain *Vladimir Kourash*: First of all the whole atmosphere on the vessel depends on how united, honest, ethical, and human the captain and the chief engineer are. If they are not united then two departments will be created and they will start to compete: 'who', 'how' and 'whose' department and this is very dangerous. People are divided into two departments. One says it is your department and the others say it is yours. In these situations one of them (captain or chief engineer) must leave the vessel...'

'Aesthetics and psychological atmosphere on the vessel depends on human characteristics of the Captain, on his professionalism. There are factors which are significant. Some captains say 'I did it, I completed the contract, I have achieved it successfully' and the others turn to the whole crew and say 'we did', 'these are our achievements and these are our failures'. This means that the crew is a family. The border is invisible but one can feel the difference. When the crew is united then the success is achieved very well. There are always 4-5 men in the crew who play the main role. These are the leaders: the leader on the deck, leader on the bridge and leader in the engine room. If these leaders are highly qualified and have a positive and good character, then on the vessel everything goes very well. Victor Vasilievitch (the crew manager of the company) knows this very well and he selects people properly. There can be exceptions.

'Of course, on the vessel there are details to which the Captain must pay close attention. For example, in the morning the chief officer comes to the bridge to keep

watch. He looks tired and in a bad mood. Some captains will not pay attention to this, others will joke about it, will talk to him, by trying to lift the spirits. If the officer is satisfied and looks happy the captain can be sure of his performance during his watch...'

'Once, the chief officer came to me and said: I demand to disembark a crewmember. I asked, what had happened. The problem was that he gave a command to the seaman but not in the proper way but in a way that humiliates the seaman's personality. The seaman reflects on it. He did not speak to chief officer with respect to his position, as the chief officer said. He was demanding respect because he was a commander. He asked me to give him the line to report to the office about seaman's behaviour. I said: 'I will give you the line but I will investigate what happened and I will give my opinion'. Later, when the chief officer calmed down I explained to him that he had no right as a commander to shout at the people and humiliate them. We should never humiliate people. It is very important on the vessel. We have no right even to judge them. We can judge his actions. For example, the seaman broke the rule. We (command team) called him and discussed why he had behaved in that way, what the reason was. We tried to find out the core of the problem. Even if the seaman was drinking and he deserves punishment by disembarking him we do it without humiliating his personality and without shouting and noise. I explained to him that I respected him as a man but he had breached the contract, the rule of the company. If I forgive him more seamen will drink alcohol at the next port...'

### ***The captain first must follow the rules and regulations***

As Captain *Vladimir Kourash* says: 'I was a Captain of the training boat in 1991 in Texas, USA. We were sailing one month with American cadets. We organised a party and we invited American seamen on our boat. I sent an official letter to the American command team to visit us the following day. On the first day our visitors were the vice-president of the university, the training captain and other lower rank officers but the Captain of the American boat was absent. They told us that he was sick and could not be present. The next day we planned to discuss our training programme at 11 am. I invited them again on our boat because our boat was newer and more comfortable. That day I met the captain of the American boat. He was a very nice man and we became friends later. When I asked him what he would like to

drink: coffee or tea because it was 11am. Then the captain said: 'I will tell you the truth. I was not sick yesterday. I have never met Russian captain before that's why I first sent secret agent to see how the situation is and they told me that you have a very good brandy. Let's drink brandy'. I understood that he likes to drink alcohol. But he said that on their vessel there was a 'dry rule'. It was prohibited to bring on the vessel alcohol, even beer. Later on when we finished our discussion about our future training cooperation I prepared one bag with different drinks: vodka, brandy, and other alcoholic drinks and I wanted to give him this present. He was surprised and said: 'but I told you that we have a regulation – 'no alcoholic drinks on the vessel'. I told him: 'But you are a captain'. He looked at me and said: 'I am the first who must follow the rules and regulations'. These are very important issues of ethics and aesthetic that the captain first must follow. I apologised that we (Russians) get accustomed to this: 'when you are on the top you can breach the rules'. In the Soviet Union this became a habit. This is the mentality of Russian people.'

***'The biggest test is through power'***

From the words of *Oleg Monashev*: 'There are people who simply do not see the human side of their subordinates. For them they are working power – that's it. There is the beginning of the conflict in a relationship. Yes, of course he gives orders and even if he is not right, you eventually go to do your work. I consider telling him my opinion, this is what I will do, how I react. But conflict has already arisen...People know that they must say 'Yes sir' and get to work. This arouses people's indignation...They look at people as working beasts, you are a slave, you come here to work and you are paid for this and be nice; if not, I will send you home at the next port with your expenses...'

'There are others who are working their first contract as a captain and they are starting to build their confidence. They look at you with icy eyes. For them you simply do not exist as a person. I have experienced this feeling many times...when the man is unapproachable like a rock, and he has so much pride for his position, that he thinks that immediately he must start to smoke a pipe, and always be very serious and he is so puffed up with conceit that to all your questions he will turn hard and answer with arrogance. Only these manners and his behaviour from the stranger's side, even if you do not know him, maybe he is from another crew, this

first look most of the time become true. You look at him and think: 'No, I would not like to work with him; he is too inaccessible for the people'. And I think that last period this is real misfortune...'

'Of course, with a Captain like Cotov, you feel that first of all he faces you as a personality. This happened with me when directly after contract on "Brahms" I was sent on the other vessel to work with Cotov and I thought that company was not fair with me. For three months, Cotov sent telexes to the company, concerning my request. The answer, of course, was negative but I was surprised that I asked him once and every time when we met with Cotov on the bridge he informed me that he had sent again telex about my request. He did tenacious efforts and he was not afraid that he would be black-listed by the company. I respect Cotov as a person and I respect him as my Captain...'

'There are masters who are just administrators, but a real Captain first of all must be a psychologist, he must lead his crew and people will strive after him, and will trust this kind of Captain till the end...'

'Now priorities have changed. They say: 'People can always be replaced, we need to care about vessel. But the vessel has no soul. People have become like robots now. They turn off their desire to develop spiritually, to learn to be compassionate. It is rare now. The main wish is where and how to earn more money. Honest and trustful relationships are not common today. People have become closed in their shell.'

'It is very important, not to hurt people, because degrading a human being is not permitted. And this must come from the heart and not from the mind. Maybe some of my truth will help in developing human relations, which recently has been forgotten and not only in shipping but everywhere in everyday life. If there is still hope that something can help in overcoming that gap between good old relationships I will be happy. Sometimes against our moral principles we decide in favour of rationalization. When people say: 'now, this is the life', I do not agree with this. People always, in every situation must remain humans. First and foremost we are humans. People must be honest with themselves and others. The most fearful judge is your conscience...'

'Aesthetic perceptions need to be fostered. If companies want to create their own cadre of loyal people, the two most important positions, with the greatest power, must be filled by people possess proper education and training. It is not enough to have a theoretical professional knowledge, as above all they must have an aesthetic

education. Sometimes the destiny of other people depends on these two men: the Captain and the Chief engineer. If these people are educated not only professionally but also aesthetically, then many mistakes can be predicted and conflicts can be avoided. I am not very knowledgeable in this area but I think that it is necessary. There should be courses comprising knowledge in human relationships, the aesthetics of the relationship between crewmembers. People say, 'Human souls as well as bodies should be beautiful'.

'There is a saying that 'the biggest test is through power', and I know what this means. People who are not morally and aesthetically educated enough can damage, emasculating others. Especially at sea, where people are isolated, they are very stressed and in order to normalise the situations by relieving feelings and defusing crisis there needs to be an aesthetically and culturally educated man at the helm. The aesthetics of relationships and communication becomes very important under the specified conditions of risk, lack of home comforts and warmth, stress and isolation.'

***'False note, dissonance in relationship is not accepted by the seamen'***

As Alexander Beliayev says: 'False note, dissonance in relationship is not accepted by the seamen. When your actions and words are in dissonance, you say and do different things. You feel that he is not honest. You understand it from his character, from his stories, which he tells us. We understand that he conveys immorality. And seamen do not accept this man. A working environment with only men has its significance. And relationships must be laconic and straight. Our profession conveys and naturally chooses people with strong spirit and character...'

As Captain Shikin says: 'Seamen have a feeling of responsibility towards others and can't be indifferent to others' emotions. There are, of course, moments of small clashes or when someone's feelings are hurt, but on the whole people who work on the same vessel care about each other. About 80% of the men who work for this company are good. In the beginning, I had some difficulty getting to know the people, but after my second and third contract, I learnt people and they learnt me. Perhaps when people feel human sympathy, they work better-this is the power of a captain, being able to influence people...'

‘Being able to influence people also depends on their ethics and culture. There are times when you need to try to ignore bad behaviour, if it is not very serious. However, if discussion is not effective because the person doesn’t or can’t change, then you need to take radical action. We rarely get to such a point. For example, a seaman might be doing repair work on the deck without the proper safety gear. This doesn’t make sense to me because when I tell them, I do it for the own good and not mine. If they have an accident and become paralyzed, they won’t be able to take care of their families. So in such cases I have to reprimand them...’

‘The company policy is very good - the aim is to work as a team and for the crew to be professional and reliable. If someone was not able to become party of the team, it means there was a problem with his personality. There are cases of men who always find fault with everything. Of course, not everyone can be good at his work, moral, professional, ethical, to have culture or be good at communication. One will be better than another. You see who is better or worse and you select the best. People definitely appreciate good behavior, good relationship or treatment and this is an incentive for them to improve and become more productive.’

‘When something is related to the safety of the crew, it’s the responsibility of the captain. But when the situation is vital for their safety, it’s important that all the men feel responsible for other members...’

As Captain *Andrey Savin* puts it: ‘If we don’t discuss the difficulties, they escalate...’

‘I believe I can give strict orders, I can ask politely and even give them my wishes! When I give them a polite order, they feel good and do their work more eagerly. Sometimes, in critical situations, when things need to be done quickly, they have to deal with my strict and intense orders.’

From the words of Chief Officer *Alexander Gomzyakov*: ‘Emotions arise when we have a very hard and a big volume of work, when people do not sleep and they are very tired. Yes, this is the situation when the emotions blow up. Yes, I need to say ‘well done’, ‘you were working very well’. And when we are in the port, everyone must go out if it is possible, all of us need to have a break one day, because men can break down physically...’

‘People are always striving after educated and intelligent persons and they try to copy their manners. And if you have power and authority by position, you must not take an advantage of your power by putting pressure on the people.

Your subordinates look at you but how can you influence them? If they see that you are educated and you have the knowledge, they say: ‘I will ask the Chief, definitely he knows’ and even after work and the questions related to their personal life...’

‘It is always easier to regulate when you have a levers of regulation. It means that the crew member must know that if he does not fulfil the instruction, he will not just make me sad but he will be punished accordingly. If he does not understand then there should be levers of regulation. Because if I am trying explain to him and he does not understand then why must I spend my energy without reason. He is not the only one - I also have other seamen. It is impossible to regulate the situation on an emotional level. As we cannot pump out the oil products to the sea. And this is not just request. There are rules and regulations. And we will have a problem. I have levers and I am a guard. We are independent. But there are the rules of community. And we must learn and carry out these rules. If most of the crew does not smoke then others must respect the non-smokers...’

### ***‘King and God at Sea’***

From the words of Chief Officer *Alexander Gomzyakov*: ‘I have worked with different nationalities and I had no problems apart from the minor details. And there are different types of Captains, educated and non-educated ones. But I cannot say that I like to work with one captain or another. This is not a lady that I like or not. I was taught when I was a cadet that the Captain on the ship is a king and God, he has all responsibilities. And when I say to the seaman: ‘You know, my friend, I cannot communicate with you, let’s go to the Captain’. This must be a shock for him, because the Captain is the last resort. Yes the Captain is a directing and thrusting power, and first of all he organises the work of the Chief Officer and the Chief engineer...’

As Chief Engineer *Evgeny* puts it, ‘At sea, a captain is the king and God, and when giving orders he must know their consequences. At the same time, he is the company representative and the boss – and at times, a dictator. The safety of the

vessel, the crew and the cargo are determined by international safety regulations. Life on a ship depends, for the most part, on the captain. The requirements of each company differ. Sometimes, they are very strict in their organisational structure...'

'The role of a leader is complex. What distinguishes a good from a bad captain or chief engineer? The human factor...The human factor plays a major role. Crews are being reduced due to automation. As a result, the workload is increasing as is the pressure. This is why I believe the optimal period of a contract is 6 months...'

'The Russian fleet has suffered a setback because the best seamen have left for better-paying companies. A very important factor is the salary. However, there are companies which pay good money but do not have stability in their payments or working conditions. Of course, if people are not treated well, no good salary will keep them there.'

'Sometimes, there can be conflicts and it is necessary to replace someone. After many years at sea, I try to compromise, even if I don't like the captain. There are captains who make illogical demands, yet our personal conflict must not affect our work because we are responsible for the crew and cargo. Captains must have knowledge of human behaviour. If the captain is sultry or makes illogical demands, you will not approach him for advice. On the other hand, he may be a strict administrator but at the same time fair and sensitive...'

Unfortunately, in my career I had a fire on the vessel. We were in the Red Sea but we took all the necessary safety measures and successfully put it out. On that voyage, we had further troubles with the second engineer who 58 years old-near pension- and an alcoholic. This behaviour forced me to go to the captain and request that he be fired. When the decision was made to fire him, he begged us and told us he needed to support his family. I had a heavy heart doing this, but I had no choice- I had given him many chances...'

'When you work with good professionals, you do not need to constantly run after them to do their jobs. Under such circumstances, human relationships can develop normally. Both sides are satisfied on the ship and at the same time the owners are satisfied with the results of our work. In this way, you can find free time to relax. However, we-the captain and chief engineer-have a lot of paperwork due to the new regulations...'

***'But at the end – it is the sea that you need to keep central'***

Shipmasters are no longer Captains of their vessels and Masters next to God. They are managers who do what some university educated geek who has never been aboard a ship with a degree in Maritime Transportation tells them. 'But at the end – it is the sea that you need to keep central', - says one sailor.

As Captain *Chernobrovkin* says, '...superintendents, who give directions from land, often do not understand how important it is to prioritize at sea. For example, I had a Port Control and the representative from the offices focused on minor details and informed the offices of these. The office made negative comments on these, to which I replied that I had focused all the crew on the preparation for inspection. They don't understand that I wasted a lot of time communicating with them, trying to point out the correctness of my actions. But this is very difficult because the office wants to emphasize their importance by pretending that they know what is best for the ship. Finally, I don't say anything, I do my job and I pass successfully the major inspection and I am the one who has won this 'contest'. What matters is that our time is limited and it is a pity wasting so much of it on details...'

'A leader on land and a leader at sea are different. At sea, a captain cannot survive alone without his followers, who will either follow or betray him.

I have already had two contracts with this company and both were successful. However, I have become stricter. Sometimes, when the end of a contract approaches, you become more edgy and short-tempered and at times you yell, especially when you are under pressure. It is very difficult to recognize your mistake and this is one of the characteristics that a captain needs to possess. A leader cannot be selfish...'

As Captain *Khromikhin* puts it, 'I love my work with pathos. I know my work, my vessel so well. For twenty years I have been working so closely in this field. And sometimes superintendents from the company come to the vessel and thrust their opinion on you. Or somebody from office thinks that his loading plan is better than mine. They, of course, cancel my plan. It is disappointing. Or we, with the Chief officer and other officers, have discussed and agreed to organise some repair works on the vessel. We prepared a team of crew members for paint the vessel and the

superintendent comes from the office and says: 'so, we cancel this task, we will do now another task.' We had positive energy and were organised. And they do this in front of the crew. This is not right. And later they realise their mistake but it is already too late. The superintendent became angry because he understood that he was wrong, but he could not do anything, he can never say 'sorry, I was wrong'. And it depresses us. I lose my passion. I try to face it with humour but sometimes I go to my office to calm down. When I know that he was not right and I can prove it, in the beginning I want to send a report to the company about his behaviour, but I know that this will humiliate him (superintendent) and I do not want to do this. I have been working in the company for many years and I learnt them very well. Many times they contradict themselves. I tell them that you are not right. They can humiliate you in front of your crew and never say 'sorry'.'

'Once a group of seamen were ready for disembarking but I could not pay them because company had not sent 'pay off money' in time. They sent me information: 'let seamen leave the vessel and crew manger will bring them money at the airport.' I said that seamen would not leave the vessel before they were paid. I knew that it happened sometimes that the company did not keep their promise and paid them very late. My priority is my crew and I always support them if they need something. It is always mutual. I support my people and people follow me.

### *3.3.10 Creating positive spirit on a ship*

How power is deployed, and by whom, affects the aesthetic character of the organisation by influencing the 'spirit of the place'.

***'The whole climate on the vessel depends on the Captain'***

As Chief Engineer *Sergey Novitsky* says, '...the whole climate on the vessel depends on the Captain. He has all authority; all lines go through him. The moral and aesthetic climate of the vessel depends on the morality and aesthetics of the Captain.'

As *Oleg Monashev* said: 'If a home atmosphere is created, where people feel that they are not in army barracks performing military services, they can feel the comfort of a home, which is native to them, and where they are surrounded by care and awareness. I do not know how to express myself, but we would like to feel that we are not always in the working place, and that we can also feel some home comfort. For instance, when I go down to the engine room which is where I work, I want to feel I am at home when I am up on deck, where I can find comfort and warmth. But this is mostly in the hands of the company.'

'The vessel has been divided between the bridge and the engine room since the vessel uses steam engine propulsion. A clever man will always listen to the opinions of others. However, the Chief engineer's opinion is no less important. We are in the same vessel, and we must therefore take into consideration all the positive and negative sides of the situation. I may have forgotten something, missed something, or maybe I did not take something into consideration. We work in the same 'harsh environment', we co-exist and we must understand each other. Thinking of who is most important is not the most vital thing to do.

***'Incorrectly timed spoken words are more dangerous than gunshots'***

From the words of *Oleg Monashev*: 'Definitely, if the Captain is good it is the ideal model, because even if the Chief engineer is very good but the Captain is not proper, this can change the entire atmosphere on the ship.'

'Of course, it can only work if from the very beginning the company gives the initiative to the Captain and the Chief engineer, who have the power, and if they can be the persons who influence people and people trust them. For people in position of power the company must upgrade the following qualities: humanity and relationship aesthetics. Sometimes incorrectly timed spoken words are more dangerous than gunshots.'

As Chief Engineer *Alexander Beliayev* puts it, 'It is very difficult to go to work and wait when your working hours and days will pass. It is almost impossible. It is easier to work with people who generate positive energy, independently of their position. People who convey negativism without saying or doing something they put pressure

on you. When you have a command from the leader (the Captain) in a correct form, everything is clear and under control...’

‘In good shipping companies the discipline and hierarchy is on a high level. Everything is in order. ‘Please’ is a command. Everything is in intonation. The colour of command is an aesthetic of communication. Marine culture demands commanding, as it must be. As in the movie ‘Master and Commander’ – these are the real relationships at sea. Captain has an authority and the vessel is a semi-military organisation. Discipline is a demand and appearance of anarchy is prohibited. Natural selection - 90% of seamen are possessed with all necessary capabilities.’

From the words of Captain *Vladimir Kourash*: ‘What I think of many years’ at sea, sometimes a wrong person can land a job on the vessel, and they are trouble makers, or hell raisers, as I say. They are always unsatisfied.’

‘I met in our company young officers whose natural kindness and positiveness had vanished... In order to be happy... People must not get caught in mundane goods, as people say ‘God gave it and God took it’. And if the man thinks that he is better than the others he will not be successful either in his career or in his private life... If the man humiliates other people then later in his life he will be humiliated by the others. The leader must have a philosophical understanding of life...’

‘On the vessel all attempts must be directed at making people feel well and work with enthusiasm and keep discipline. On the vessel we must lead people and not urge forward...’

‘If the captain reaches the level when his people can understand him from one glance it is the result of good communication. The captain must communicate with people everywhere: in the work place and after working hours. The highest achievement for the captain is to create positive atmosphere on the vessel... I believe that people feel each other on the thin fields. And if this communication is happened on the positive fields (aura)... For example sometimes you delivered the vessel from previous captain and everything is going well. But sometimes after delivery of the vessel for some period of time you feel in the cabin heavy atmosphere...’

‘If the spirit of placidity and good humour is hovering over the vessel and whole crew is happy, as we say god helps us. People must smile at each other more often. In this company I was working with Georgian chief engineer and unfortunately he

left the company. It was not his fault. This man created such a beautiful atmosphere that all the crew on the vessel was very happy. In those conditions productivity was much higher. I think that this factor is very important...'

'On the vessel all attempts must be directed at making people feel well and work with enthusiasm and keep discipline. On the vessel we must lead people and not urge forward...'

'Many companies recognize that the second most important person on the vessel is a cook. For seamen the food is a very important factor. Cook must be qualified and professional. The mood of a seaman depends on the mood of the captain and the cook. Usually people ask whether captain or cook has woken up in a good mood...'

As Captain *Khromikhin* says: 'If there are problems on the vessel and the whole crew are not happy with the politics of the company Captain send reports to the head office. The company will not replace the crew but they replace the Captain. And even if this Captain is a super experienced navigator the company will not forgive him that he creates negative atmosphere on the vessel and they will ask him to sign off...'

### ***Only with kindness can you influence and change seamen***

From the words of Captain *Chernobrovkin*: 'But let's return to our discussion about how a Captain can create a positive atmosphere on a ship. Nowadays, the company is hiring new, young captains who come on board full of arrogance, wanting to project their ego. They tend to want to accentuate every mistake their subordinates make, thus creating a negative atmosphere on the ship and forming a negative image in their crew's eyes. I don't mean pampering the crew, but not humiliating or upsetting them. This doesn't have good results...'

'If the captain has a positive image, then people will follow him. If he sees that his crewmembers develop individually, then the crew as a whole progresses. Believing in people is also a characteristic of a leader. Without this belief, you are nothing at sea. I have seen men of not very good character become better people during the contract. If someone does not have the will to change, then they will not develop. Only with kindness can you influence and change them. It is a captain's duty to create a positive atmosphere on the vessel...'

As Captain *Shikin* says: ‘People definitely appreciate good behavior, good relationship or treatment and this is an incentive for them to improve and become more productive.’

I have to create this atmosphere because the company demands this from me. But no one asks me how I feel, if I understand this or whether I consider it rational or not. Of course, when you believe in the effectiveness of something, this gives a burst of positive energy...’

‘People’s feelings on the ship must be positive and this is why the captain’s example always influences people. The style of command also plays an important role. They can sense when the captain is more, or less emotional or in a good or bad mood. If during the whole 8-9 months, he yells and shouts at people, then this is his style. But if he yells only on occasion, the crew understands that even the captain might be in a bad mood once in a while in the 8-9 months. People can also understand the feelings of the captain through intonation. Most times they are positive feelings but they can also be negative at times.’

### ***‘I’m here for you!’***

As Captain *Loushnikov* puts it, ‘There are cases where you need to inspire your crew. For example, when we change the cargo from coal to grain, ideally the cargo tanks need to be cleaned thoroughly. However, the men are down and exhausted because they are black from the coal. And there you need to inspire them; your voice needs to be emotionally coloured and to tell them: “I’m here for you!”, “It’s not something difficult!”...Here, the emotions will help inspire the people. If you start by yelling, the people’s spirits will fall.’

From the words of Chief Engineer *Evgeny*: ‘A pleasant environment on the ship is not achieved only by the captain and chief engineer but also by the bossman and the crewmember. In this way, you live and work more pleasantly...’

As Captain *Golovanov* says, ‘There are four positions on the vessel: captain, chief officer, chief engineer and the second engineer. And these people create the spirit of the vessel. If we cooperate well together and have a good relationship then

everything on the vessel goes well. If this team cannot communicate well then it is difficult to work...'

'When seamen meet me in the morning, in spite of being exhausted, I must smile at them, ask how they feel and ask about their families. In the period of working together I also feel responsible for the families of my crew. ...'

### *3.3.11 Knowing and Acting through practical judgments*

People always *make judgments based on sensation and aesthetics*. This school of quotations illustrate that aesthetic knowledge gained by seamen through practical judgments becomes most critical for leaders at sea in discharging their responsibilities.

As Captain *Sergey Khromikhin* said: 'From twenty-four years old I became a chief officer, the second man on the vessel. I was working with fourteen different captains. There were young petty tyrants, the old ones that gave all their experience to me, and the others, which left you to learn by your own...I was very lucky with my first Captain. He gave me all command of the vessel but he was keeping me under control...He gave me the first lessons of leading on practice. He was saying: 'Look at the captain, his relationship with chief officer, how he behaves with his officers-navigators, with crewmembers, how he talks to mess boys.' Everything was on examples...'

'I became experienced because I had good teachers who were always ready to help me and to give me their experience.'

'There is no ideal man. You always remember the positive sides of each captain. I learn some things from one captain, other things from another. But I have learnt also from the stories told about unknown captains.'

'The most important thing is to be respectful to the people who respect you. It is not enough to be a Captain-leader by position, and professional navigator. This clear human side of the captain is very important. As one of my captains told me once: 'Sergey, you say something and people follow you.' And I told him: 'But nobody will follow you'. This captain was very experienced navigator but he could not lead people. Despite being twice younger than him (captain) I was leading people. People

were looking at my eyes, even seamen who were the age of my father. They were saying: ‘Chief said...and they could not leave that work for later.’ I never talk to seamen in the form of command. I was saying with humour and kindly and people like this. I could be very strict in my requirements but again it was in humorous form. The most important thing is your relation; you must relate to the man with respect; to make him feel comfortable to come to you (to his captain) and tell you his problem and simply communicate with you. There are captains (kind of petty tyrants) who do not permit crewmembers to go upstairs on the bridge. I was working with this kind of captain...’

‘Man in a leading position must respect his subordinates. People who can hurt and humiliate others are arrogant, petty tyrants, and egoists.’

***‘Show them kindness and win their hearts’***

As Chief Engineer *Peter Covsh* says: ‘The first month I organise my work, I examine and learn the whole vessel. The more you work, the more you learn and your work on this vessel becomes more interesting...’

‘It is important to complete the work that has been started and control its accomplishment. The engine requires controlling at each step, each detail. I always control not only others work but also mine. One must recognize his mistakes. It comes with experience. Now I am not afraid to recognize if I was wrong...’

‘The seamen as everyone else have weaknesses. If you award them with kind word or give them small bonus they will try their best, they will do everything for you. As people say, ‘show them kindness and win their hearts’. Many captains do not realize that people on the vessel miss care and warmth and by giving them care and be aware to them you can win people’s hearts...’

‘Once the owner of the company visited the vessel and I was surprised when he wears the boiler suit and went down to the engine room and he saw the corroded frame and said: ‘I can understand the wear and tear of the engine but how difficult is it to remove the rust?’ I felt shame for the condition of my engine and for this comment.’

‘I need to keep the balance of the engine crew. If you relax then you lose control. If you do not go down to the engine room every morning to control the situation then you can lose the rhythm of the work, you lose your control of the engine crew.’

Second engineer can take command but they usually hide the troubles (damages). Because the engine is the responsibility of the chief engineer I always must check and control. Everything is going well when everything is all right.

If there is any damage of the engine and you stay behind in your plans, people are stressed and it seems that they know everything but in that situations they are confused and feel lost. If my people made mistake I have never complained to the office. That's why they try hard to correct or fix the damage. First of all I investigate the problem and then I say to the captain: 'do not inform the office immediately'. When we have passed the stress and we investigate the problem and realize what happened then we can inform the office. If you support your people they always will try hard, will work over-time and without complains they will support you when it is necessary...'

As Captain *Vladimir Kourash* says: 'If the captain does not love people, his crew, he must leave this profession. The work of the captain is multisided. At the same time the captain must be a teacher, must know very well marine law, must be a very good navigator and must be able to communicate with people in the port and everywhere...May be I was lucky in my marine life but I always had a good crew...' 'Next year I am thinking of being based on the shore. At my age and after so many years at sea I feel that now is the time to offer my experience and knowledge to the young captains on the shore...'

***'Treat people in the way you want to be treated'***

As Captain *Chervanev* said: 'I was a Chief Officer for 12 years and have been a Captain for 10. I like to be in control of everything that happens on board. I know from experience that if a person feels that he is controlled, he will always be alert...' 'I think that different people need a different approach. In situations where people are relaxed, you need to be strict. I cannot rely on people who drink. You know that Russian seamen have a problem - they like to drink. In the Soviet system, as the Americans used to joke, people pretended to work and the State pretended to pay. In those days you could not demand anything because they earned very little money and the only thing you could do was threaten them with the KGB. But now, times have changed. Seamen earn a lot of money compared to land jobs. In spite of these

high salaries, seamen start drinking again at times. Unfortunately, you must be strict on this matter-I send them home. They must understand that discipline must be like in the army...’

‘And these incidents shape a relationship which is not always smooth, as is the case with families too. The difference is that in a family, arguments are more easily forgotten while on a ship, they are not forgiven. For example, if a person holds inside something that is bothering them, it is much more difficult for him to overcome it...’

‘It is important that our crew is all the same nationality and culture-we are all from the former Soviet Union. However, I have also worked with international crews and never faced any serious problems.

In different cultures, people react and express their feelings differently. Nowadays, our Chief Officers and Captains are invited to the company’s offices in Greece for an interview before going to the vessel. For example, today I was asked “why Russians behave in this way”. A captain must understand his men and behave accordingly. Unfortunately, you cannot treat everyone in the same way. The relationship must remain “normal” but you cannot always achieve this. This relationship must be achieved by both sides-seamen must know why they came to the vessel.’

‘Professionalism and character cannot be separated from each other at sea. Honesty among crewmembers must also exist. In one word, I would say that you must treat people in the way you want to be treated...’

‘People have preferences concerning what captain they would like to work for. Sometimes in my mind I create the ideal crew with which I would like to work. First of all, they must be professionals. For example, if he is a good navigator but doesn’t know something I can show or teach it to him. Secondly, their behaviour is important. The seamen should not create conflicts because they affect the rest of the crew on board. Sometimes, a person is simply not a professional. Such people are dangerous at sea...’

‘Our main goal is to make money for the company. My main effort is to make them work - to keep watch, to clean the tanks, to load and discharge the cargo...A lot depends on the captain. You cannot walk around the ship and among people agitated or nervous. I am not sullen as I am pleased with life and most often I smile. Only if there are difficult situations do I become firm and strict.

However, I cannot say that I am a captain who brings people close to him emotionally-we have different ranks in the hierarchy. I can help them with any problems they may have with their families, through the company, but nothing further...’

From the words of Chief Engineer *Evgeny*: ‘A Captain may give orders in a strict manner and then turn his back to the crew while another may be more humane and show interest in his people. Paradoxically, I prefer working with people with strict discipline and subordinates who are obedient because it is easier to work with them. Such a team is more productive...’

‘The crew’s behaviour depends on ours. If the Captain drinks, then the crew drinks. If the Captain and the Chief Officer do not treat people with respect, then they will behave accordingly. Human relations on board are very delicate. There have been cases of tragedy in the seamen’s lives and you need to comfort them at such times...’

‘Everything depends on the example that the leaders on the ship set. This is very difficult-you can’t please everyone. Those who are reserved find it more difficult at sea than open, happy people, who are much more pleasant to work with. Ten days is enough time to see how good a seaman is-how he behaves when he works and towards other people...’

‘Nowadays, people come to earn money. We need to feel sorry not only for him but also for the rest of the Russian seamen who get a negative reputation because of people like him. Who will feel sorry for us when we get into trouble since we are responsible for the crew? You need to have them on a tight leash...’

‘We demand from our subordinates only what is specified in their contracts. There is a Russian word “must” but this word should not be overused. People know when something needs to be done and will not refuse to do it even if it is after their working time. People who have been at sea for a long time know that there are tasks that cannot wait and must be done immediately...’

### ***‘From controversy we learn the truth’***

As *Oleg Monashev* puts it, ‘There is an old proverb: ‘From controversy we learn the truth’. If many problems pile up to which there are no solutions, then there will

come a particular moment when they can blow up. In old times we had “final meetings” every month during which everyone could state their problems. Usually meetings were held by the departments. After that we had a final ship meeting during which people could relieve their pent up energy. If there is no place to relieve the pressure there will be crises, as depressed people cannot adequately react to arguments. To relieve a ‘pressured steam’ in small doses could be good for people. I know this from my own experience. When during work meetings people come together to discuss their problems, which are a cause of pain to them, this results in a great deal of vociferating. Usually after these meetings, relationships between people become smoother. If the right moment was lost when the situation could be improved, the break becomes bigger. And not only between people (crew members) but also if the Captain has lost the window of opportunity, all people become strangers to each other and it is very difficult to work, as the crew do not form a team any longer.

***‘People don’t like being let down’***

As Captain *Arkady Savin* says: ‘The relationship between a captain and his crew depends on both sides and people have different characters. It is difficult to explain what makes this relationship work. I can’t say I have an amicable relationship with everyone. Sometimes, you can’t avoid a confrontation with someone. If my people are smiling, I know everything is alright. But if I see their faces gloomy, I try to find out the reason for this. Unfortunately, you are sometimes forced to fire someone. I regret having to do this. I’ve only had to do this three times in 25 years and I always tried to give them enough warning and chances before letting them go.’

‘In practice, everything is more difficult so if someone one of my seamen is upset by someone, perhaps a chief officer or chief engineer, I don’t think it’s proper for me to intervene. I will give my opinion to the chief engineer if he is responsible, but I cannot tell him to apologize. Perhaps next time he will correct his mistake. At times, you have to replace one of the two, usually the seaman, but I have never had to. If both are good professionals this will have a negative impact on our work. I will try to speak to them to calm them down and in such situations you need to be a diplomat and a psychologist.

If we have disagreements, the final resort is to make a decision. Either I make the decision myself and tolerate no disagreement- if it is a critical situation and there is no time for discussion- or, if we have time, I raise the matter for discussion and try to solve it together. When we need to make navigational measurements, my assistant and I sit at our separate computers and then compare the calculations. At times, when my younger assistants' opinions differ from mine, it causes me discomfort. Sometimes I try to persuade them, at others I simply order them. The chief officer is usually young and when the problems are minor, I explain to them why something must be done so and I teach it to them so that a minor problem does not turn into a major one. If there are any doubts about the best course of action, then I discuss this with my assistants-if there is time. It all depends on the situation. There were times when they were right and I told them so. My office is always open and they can all come in.'

'Because my chief officer and other assistants are highly qualified officers, my communication with them is in the form discussion and even if we have disagreements, I convince through discussion. I only give orders to low ranking officers.'

'I know my people by observing them and by asking my chief officer and chief engineer about them. When I have learnt enough about someone, I begin to shape an opinion. Of course, the information I get from my chief officer might not be precise so I need to be careful because after each contract I make recommendations for the new seamen -I do not want to comment on someone unfairly. A seaman's character cannot be changed but his behaviour can be improved.'

'On the ship you do not need to be an artist; you need to be an artist when you are at the port, in front of the port authorities-those connected with the exploitation of the vessel: representatives of charters, surveyors, agents, suppliers, loading masters. We know what they expect of us so we need to be artists.'

'People don't like being let down. If you have promised them something, you must keep your word. Sometimes, when one of two crewmembers needs to leave, it is very difficult for the Captain to make that decision.'

### *'Action is the best example'*

As Captain *Shikin* says: 'How well you learn a person's ability to work at sea depends on the contract-its destination and duration. Within 8-9 months you can definitely see if a new seaman is interested in his work and does it with pleasure. While when someone doesn't like his work, he starts complaining before you even give him instructions. So, you form an opinion about a person and you take it into consideration.'

'People feel that I care about them and am interested in their professional development. The most important thing is that they see that with my actions I feel responsible for them. This raises their morale and causes a positive reaction from them. The danger and risk of our job is characteristic so the men want to feel safe with their captain...'

'There is no room for error at sea. It is human factor and not machinery that is responsible for mistakes. Our target is to foresee and pre-act so we can avoid accidents and casualties. I always tell my assistants not to hesitate to wake me if they have doubts about their navigation. They mustn't inform me when it's too late so that I can have time to solve the problem. If you take control of the situation early enough, you don't let the situation become irreversible-you can correct the course of the ship. In extraordinary situations, it's sometimes very difficult to make fast decisions.'

'However, you need to look at each case separately. There are some demands which you understand and find useful, and this gives you satisfaction. But there are things you don't see the purpose of-they have no rationality and no effect. Because situations and people and approaches vary, you can't have a uniform behaviour for all situations. For example, there is a casualty report which not many captains fill in and which you send to the company and it circulates to other ships so they can be informed and avoid the same mistakes. This form does not mention the vessel's name and is not critical. An example was that the ship was rocking due to bad weather and a seaman was probably not tied while doing work and broke his hand. This kind of collecting of experience can positively influence the safety of the crew in the future. We learn from others' mistakes so we can avoid them and I believe this a rational action... Action is the best example.'

‘The security officer is always the captain and he responsible for everything. These codes and rules come so quickly that you have no time to understand and apply them; if you haven’t had special training, it’s impossible to know how to diffuse an explosive device, for example-you need to be an explosives expert, I am a navigator. In effect, it does not change the safety of the ship. Despite the large amount of paperwork, the level of safety is not increased. On the contrary, it has a negative effect on our work because we waste our time and our attention on it. I believe that my job is mainly navigation-it is what I was taught to do and what I chose and love to do; it is not what they are forcing me to do.’

***‘It is an art to pass on your knowledge and thoughts to your people’***

From the words of Captain *Loushnikov*: ‘For a seaman, the feeling of self-sacrifice is very important. If you see that a situation looks dangerous and you have recognized it very early, you can’t wait for help, you need to act immediately. When a situation is critical, it’s very important, initially, to recognize what sort of situation it is. If it is an almost emergency, if I don’t act immediately, the result might be awful. The first thing that comes to my mind is not to panic. Then, you need to visually evaluate and understand the situation, which will decrease your emotional side and increase your intellectual, logical side. What I see is the reality. Then I need to hear all the information about the situation and what preceded it and then make a decision not based on emotion- you need to be completely calm. In other words, first I see and hear and then I feel and then the logical side of the brain makes the decision.’

‘When I began my career as a captain, my mentors asked me what the most difficult thing at sea was. I told them it was the safety of sailing under difficult conditions. They replied ‘No’-the most difficult thing is the people. No matter how good a captain you are-with knowledge and experience-without people you are nothing. As a Russian saying goes: “One man in battle is not a soldier.” It is an art being able to pass on your knowledge and thoughts to your people- I do this through my assistant, my chief officer. When you are a captain, you can’t do everything so it’s very important to be able to tell you exactly what they need to do.’

In our profession, everything is inter-related and if someone doesn’t do their job properly, everyone loses- they are all part of the whole.’

‘We are hostages of time and situation - normal and critical situations. In normal situations, I always have limited time for positive action. We are not artists, we must be diplomats, yet being a diplomat is an art. For example, in a situation of fire, I get the information about the fire and its extent and I immediately need to make a decision without emotions. I need to be curt and with strict intonation give my instructions on what my assistants must do. If I have emotions, I will start shouting about who’s to blame and why they let it happen. The most important in such situations is to mobilize the men and control the situation. If I stop, the men will panic.’

‘What is emotion? It’s when you start trying to find who’s to blame. This needs to come after the crisis is over. Before you do that, you need to surpass the crisis in order to save the crew and yourself. You need to leave your emotions aside to have a clear mind. Emotions are an additional energy but not at that moment-it’s a waste. However, I am a man who gets wound up but this isn’t good. You are the captain and shouldn’t blame your assistant. With artists, it’s completely different-emotions are everything. A captain cannot and must not be emotional...’

These imaginative stories and their characters are fundamental to grasping the symbolic aspects of shipboard organisational life by evoking the seaman’s connection with the sea and his respect for nature. Tragedies at sea have historically created much of the discourse associated with seas, ships and seafarers (Lundy, 2003); thus, the heroic sea rescue renders the aesthetic category of *the tragic*.

As Captain *Golovanov* puts it, ‘My first contract as a captain... I remember it as if it was today. We were passing from Belfast to Canada, which was only nine days. As soon as we had passed the Gulf of Mexico the storm ‘Isaac’ was ran after the vessel. Meteorological reports gave me different information. They directed me to the south in order to avoid the centre of storm. I had no more space to change direction; we were in the centre of the typhoon. The waves were growing and kept strengthening. And the worth that the vessel was not in the right course when the ‘ninth bank’ was approaching us. I talked to the people from speaker: ‘We are turning’. And after few minutes the main engine stopped and the vessel was rudderless, and had only 10-15 minutes of floating. The biggest wave was 14m high. In this situation the difficulty of Captains’ position is that you only imagine what can happen and you feel

powerless (unequal to such a power). We must not be afraid but must respect the power of nature. When I returned home my wife said that I had more grey hairs...'

'Sometimes it is very difficult to keep balance in situations when I must choose between safety and commercial interests of the company and Charterers. My priority is always the safety of my crew but very often I have a pressure from the company and from Charterers.

After a first contract as a captain you enter the new stage of a seaman's career. Many of the new Captains cannot stand the pressure of responsibility of Captain's position. Many of them break down and become a drunkard...'

***'Practical knowledge is more comprehensible to people'***

As Chief Engineer *Sergey Novitsky* puts it, 'Today the capacity to teach, to give, to make favour – is a talent, is a charisma. At the Soviet period we had a very strong educational basis. It was not by luck that Western companies have employed our specialists in 2-3 years. We had very good teachers (mentors). Till now I have a contact with them. When I return home I visit them and we always have themes to discuss and stories to remember from the past. I tell them about my job and they feel happy and it pleased me and gives me positive energy. They always want to hear stories about the sea. These stories bring them closed to the sea. They were real mentors. I feel their influence already twenty-five years. I started with them as a fourth engineer. I became Chief engineer and they are still with me (in my mind). They imparted their love for the work to me (love for my profession), and maybe the aesthetics of work. Maybe their methods of teaching us were not so modern but they taught us right things. Theoretical (technical) knowledge is not enough for the completion of work. Now young cadets come to the vessel with a Diploma of fourth engineer. But who will teach them? In the past we had a practice before every contract. We went to our mentors; we had a kind of workshops. Now if young seamen are lucky they will meet somebody who wants to teach them. But it is two ways around; only if he wishes to learn and he has an interest to his job I can teach him. And this interest can be provoked with interesting stories and questions...'

'In my present company all Captains are younger than me but they always support me morally. Sometimes my authority is not enough and I am obliged to send the seaman to the Captain. And this is seaman's last chance to correct his behaviour.

Otherwise we decide to turn him away. These are two key positions: Captain and Chief engineer. If we cooperate in harmony it is very important for the whole crew. We need to direct people, to set the example of how to work beautifully...'

***'The greatest secrets of becoming a captain are gained through experience'***

From the words of Captain *Andrey Chernobrovkin*: 'Nowadays Russian seamen have entered international shipping and are earning high salaries. In the past there was a negative image of our seamen because of their heavy drinking. There were rules and punishment but they were not effective. Today there are "dry rules" and the punishment is financial. If they are found drinking, they pay heavy fines or even lose their jobs. Because the financial factor is very important to them, as they always remember that their families rely on them financially.'

'Another ability a captain needs to possess is to recognize the individual talent of each officer and to try to use it to the advantage of the whole ship. In this way, the captain can save time by allocating duties to his officers and can show them he trusts them. When you teach you also learn and this is something you must never stop doing...'

'I teach them how to command. This is one of the arts of leadership, where you must find the right intonation to reach their minds and conscience. In crisis situations, the intonation of the captain's commands is vital if the crew is to understand the seriousness of the situation and mobilize rather than panic. Yet the talent of a captain is not only to give commands but to understand and communicate with people. This is the most difficult ability to master in order to touch their minds and souls...'

'There is a big difference between the duties and responsibilities of a captain and a chief officer and this difference lies in prioritizing our goals and targets. For example, the main goal is to get the shipment safe and on time to its destination so both the owner and client are pleased. However, if the first engineer says there is a problem with an engine, this becomes your priority because if it breaks down it will delay you and cost money and time, resulting in bad performance for us. The criterion for a captain is to prioritize goals. It's only when you find yourself at the helm of the ship that you realize all this. This is also true during an inspection. In preparation for each inspection (port control etc), you need to prioritize goals and to

recognize strengths and weaknesses. It's always better to point out yourself to the inspector what needs repairing rather than letting him discover it. This is another very important skill a captain needs to possess-the ability to communicate effectively with the authorities. Many chief officers agree with this but there are others who believe you should try to hide the faults. We need to reach our targets with minimum mistakes and avoiding serious negative observations.'

'You must be able to put yourself in other people's shoes. In this way, it is easier to communicate not only with inspectors but with the crew or other people too...'

'By explaining your actions and through examples, you can influence people. Practical knowledge is more comprehensible to people. If the captain has a positive image, then people will follow him. If he sees that his crewmembers develop individually, then the crew as a whole progresses. Believing in people is also a characteristic of a leader. Without this belief, you are nothing at sea. I have seen men of not very good character become better people during the contract. If someone does not have the will to change, then they will not develop. Only with kindness can you influence and change them. It is a captain's duty to create a positive atmosphere on the vessel...'

'When someone replaces you as captain, you hand over to them not only the ship but also the crew with a brief character description, things that you have learnt with time-their weaknesses or strong points, what they like or dislike etc. and this is very important information for the next captain. If my previous captain had given me this information, it would have helped me work with my new crew. This is the so-called 'sensible knowledge', as you (Nana) called it, the knowledge gained by the Captain through experience...'

'Sensible knowledge is practical knowledge gained from experience. I lived through the journey of becoming captain and I have grown from the examples of other captains. If someone wrote a book about these experiences for beginner captains, it would be a more helpful guidebook than any course taught. The greatest secrets of becoming a captain are gained through experience...'

From all these thoughts above I would argue that leaders at sea are performing here as theorists of leadership. The role of the captain-leader demands an ability to read a situation, which they render through phronesis (practical judgments). The world they have constructed for themselves has become for them their 'real' world with real relationships and feelings.

This reflexive summary attempts to re-engage the reader in the textual dialogue about the 'felt sense' of this aesthetic project; which has become part of the 'aesthetic dimension' to which the aesthetic study attends (Strati, 1999; Taylor and Hansen, 2005) in order to extend knowledge about life at sea.

Listening to and enjoying sea stories have been integral to this aesthetic experience. I hope that after making this aesthetic journey into the thoughts of merchant marine seamen, the reader is able to view the lived experience of seafarers through different eyes and from the perspective of their aesthetic experience in order to extend knowledge about life at sea.

## Chapter 4: Discussion and Conclusion

### *4.1 Discussion*

If the value of a society is measured by its ability to develop fully the potentialities of its members, then the making of visual beauty and learning how to enjoy it should become important for society as a whole (Csikszentmihalyi and Robinson, 1990). It certainly seems to be crucial to the lives and experiences of people working at sea under the toughest conditions. The study shows this environment to be full of aesthetic appreciation which is often relational, arising in interaction with others' appreciation, and also full of strongly felt emotion.

To my surprise, feelings about the beauty of their surroundings seem to be enormously important to the seafarers I have talked to. They say that their aesthetic appreciation of this beauty helps them to survive and perform at sea. Harmony is clearly very important to them, - harmony both in the living conditions and in their relationship. They seem to be as concerned with the aesthetics of the sea, and as full of powerful emotions about it, as the seascape painter is.

Emotional and often sentimental expressions from the seamen define the work relationship and convey the sense of their feelings. It seems that the 'authentic', emotional behaviour of actors fosters a sense of community at work. As one of the captains said, 'If humanity and feelings work well together this will bring harmony to the work. The vessel is our 'home sweet home'. And this is true. The vessel is our wet-nurse... The ship is a female (she) and you cannot know her without loving her.'

#### *4.1.1 Relational perspective*

When people behave morally and treat each other with love, this is regarded as beautiful because it pleases the senses. This sense of beauty cannot be replaced by anything else. It becomes relational aesthetics. A relational point of view of

aesthetics encourages people to invest emotions, makes them feel good, and enables them to believe in fulfilling the needs of goodness, by using relational space. Interacting human relationships create a new form of aesthetic knowledge – relational aesthetics.

Seafarers link beauty with their feelings. They identify their feelings with aesthetic categories. For example, they link a feeling of responsibility with beauty. Unethical behaviour is ugly and unacceptable for seamen. As one officer said: ‘The feeling of responsibility is a beautiful feeling. All these issues of culture, discipline and morality, ethics, aesthetics and beauty are interrelated. Sea crew are very close to each other. Every act of a seaman is related to others. If other member of crew snubbed a seaman he cannot get over it easily as he could do on shore by meeting his family or friends. We are living together; we are eating and working together and not just for one or two days but months. In our small community people who are able to act in an immoral and ugly way cannot stay for a long time, they cannot survive... It is very important to have a positive moral climate on the vessel. If there is some anger it will affect everything: our work and the beauty of our relationship, our existence at whole. If we are cooperating in harmony it is very important for the whole crew. We need to show people, to give them an example of how to work beautifully. Beauty characterises humans. If we are not aware of aesthetics, beauty and purity then we look like more animals than humans.’

Relational communications are linked with the most important issues of social power and ethical issues. As one seaman says: ‘Moral acts are always beautiful and immoral are always ugly. People must be aesthetes in their soul. External beauty is not real. ... We learn about each other very quickly, because we are together twenty-four hours... But the whole climate on the vessel depends on the Captain. He has all authority; all lines go through him.’

In order to give meaning to their lives and work, people need to have ‘real’ relationships: love with pathos, feeling of responsibility for their fellows. A relational aesthetic makes communication ‘real’. The relationships they build at sea are works of art, created through human interaction, which can make conversation more ‘real’. People are as affected by the aesthetics of communication as by the

content of it. Aesthetic knowledge based on the emotional responses with the main motif of human belonging helps people make sense of their lives.

All the stories that I have heard from seamen have the main leitmotif that people who survive and perform at sea are those who have a loving relationship with their work, and often passions and desires are involved (Sims, 2004). For seamen the term 'shipmate' means so much. They talk about human belonging as being really all about living relationships; 'You work with others, you eat next to them, and then, of course you learn that the most important thing is how to get along with others'. These stories shape and influence everyday practices, including organising and leading. What we can learn from these stories and their interpretations is how to make the conversation more real by involving the deepest desires and passions of organisational members.

The experiences they told me about were not only aesthetic and emotional, but at times transcendental. Experiences that take them out of the realm of everyday life help them by giving them 'a foretaste of other-worldly reality'. Aesthetic experience also brings to the fore what was described by Csikszentmihalyi and Robinson (1990) as 'potentialities that the social system has repressed and in showing the cases of repression'.

Aesthetics, and emotional responses to aesthetics, are far from a luxury or an optional extra. Feelings of the beauty of their surroundings help seamen to survive and perform at sea. Emotional responses of seamen proclaim the healing powers of aesthetic experience on board. 'As I have learnt to work with people and become more experienced, I begin to understand that it is beauty, which is very important in our work and in our life in general, because it helps to organise', says one ship's officer. Those who exercise leadership on merchant marine ships (captains, chief engineers, first officers) have strong views on the importance of understanding aesthetics and emotions in discharging their responsibilities.

## ***4.2 Limitations***

This study is limited first and foremost by the experiences of the participants and organisational context of the research sites. While qualitative studies may be considered inappropriate for developing generalisable results such as those that are claimed for positivist approaches in organisation studies, my attempt to co-read and co-produce the aesthetic experience of seamen's shipboard life will enhance the transferability of the findings of this study. It is captured in the words of one ship's officer: 'In our country there was no beauty, no harmony. And this is a big problem for people... The harmony, which we reach on the vessel, in our small community, we want to bring it to our country and to our family. When I return to my mother country I want to find the same there...but instead of beauty we meet anger and drunken faces. I leave my country with hard feelings...we always hope for better conditions of life for people in our country and everywhere. Maybe the ship could be a good model of harmony and beauty in relationship; and we could transfer this to offices, to our country and our family...'

As another seafarer points out: 'This must come from the heart and not from the mind. Maybe some of my truth will help in developing human relations, which recently has been forgotten and not only in shipping but everywhere in everyday life. If there is still hope that something can help in overcoming that gap between good old relationships I will be happy. Sometimes against our moral principles we decide in favour of rationalisation...People always, in every situation must remain humans. First and foremost we are humans. People must be honest with themselves and others. The most fearful judge is your conscience.'

## ***4.3 Future directions in research***

Organisational members need us to help to provide a language and awareness of the importance of aesthetics within the organisational discourse (Taylor, 2002), which can be used to inform current discourse on the changing shape of work and to extent the 'aesthetic stream' of research within organisation studies.

This study demonstrates the value of dialogically-structured inquiries, in which we try to understand a practice from expressions of the multiple experiences of all the participants – all engaged in the process of mutual inquiry involved, become both co-practitioners and co-researchers. Thus I move beyond the traditional academic divide of practitioners and researchers in which concerns of practitioners are seen as different and distinct from researchers. Indeed, in such dialogically-structured processes, researchers become co-researchers and co-practitioners, like ordinary people in their everyday lives, dare to think ‘in the moment’, both from within the midst of complexity, and in relation to unique, never before encountered, ‘first-time’ events.

There is the potential for the leader’s knowledge to be challenged in a new way. I believe that the leadership literature will benefit from continued dialogically-structured inquiries, such as the interpretive social poetic method I chose. As Thayer (1988) pointed out leadership is, ‘concerned not with the things of the world, but the way people mind the things of the world’.

The relational perspective challenges traditional ideas in organisational behaviour and organisational theory (see, for example, Hosking, 1995, 2006; Koivunen, 2003). It seems obvious that organisational researchers should redirect their focus from internal psychological processes to what actually happens between people in organisations. Or as Goffman (1967; 3) sums it up: ‘Not, then, men and their moments. Rather moments and their men’.

Since aesthetic inquiries face certain difficulties ‘tapping into’ aesthetic experiences (Taylor, 2002), inquiries into ‘an-aesthetically’ experienced organisational lives may offer new grounded organisational knowledge and generate new concepts of organisation by giving an additional opportunity to grasp the ‘elusive’ aesthetic through evoking its presence (Strati, 1999) and by looking at leadership as an aesthetic activity.

In this effort to represent the aesthetic experiences of my participants through rich, sensory and open text forms in ways befitting of their characters and their organisational lives (Richardson, 1997), I hope to encourage other aesthetic

researchers to experiment with innovative forms (Taylor and Hansen, 2005) such as co-read emotional responses of seamen and co-create the aesthetic dimension of shipboard life by giving full rein to their own sensory and perceptive faculties, in order to know the organisation aesthetically (Strati, 2000).

I also concur with Strati (2000), Taylor and Hansen (2005) that artful inquiring (Barry, 1996) processes such as photographs, music and sea literatures have opened up the aesthetic inquiry and enhanced our 'felt senses' of the aesthetic project through the merger of art and aesthetics. Aesthetics opens the doors to artistic creation and beauty, reframing our thinking in a positive and potentially productive way. The visual images from seamen prove that art can give people an alternative approach to those aspects of consciousness that are beyond the reach of impersonal rules of reason, because the private joys and fears of people are not taken into account. As Collingwood (1938) persuasively argued, art can effectively communicate many things that concepts cannot convey. 'If I did not paint, I would like to write poems about the sea...', says the seascape painter, 'but you can find poetry in painting. They are all together. When the artist's heart is stimulated, he starts painting and...believe me, the sea you imagine is better than the one you see, because it is within you...In order to paint a good sea you need emotion. Emotion is of significant importance. Emotion has fear and awe otherwise the sea painted would be mediocre. It would be a posed sea'.

Art speaks indeed to the mind in the language allied with pathos, which seek to unite the private and the working life in a brave new paradigm. Art might easily be used to create a hospitable space for shaping our future conversations so that we can relate to others in more responsive and ethical ways. The naturally arising art of the sea, the vessel and the engine certainly seems to work like that.

At a time when idealism is out of fashion, and in which there is an absence of compassion and a failing of imagination, at such a time, it is not perhaps surprising to look for new images in poetry. 'If we can use images in the work world that have a hidden life of their own, they will give birth to other images' (Whyte, 2000). My view of the poetics being expressed here is close to what Wittgenstein (1953) was talking about when he said that 'within our embodied responsive dialogue we

articulate and create relationships with our surroundings and in doing so recreate ourselves, others and landscapes of possible action, that is, new forms of life.’ This changes the philosophy of research which, in Cunliffe’s words (2004: 281) is ‘not about what exists but what might be, not an expert interpretation but a polyphony of voices, not about the object of study but the process of how we jointly make sense of experience in specific contexts and moments’.

#### ***4.4 Future directions in practice***

Leadership in practice is about shaping relations. The importance of personal leadership and interpersonal relations on shipboard was overlooked by the management of many shipping companies. Neither the ISM Code nor thousands of port surveyors can control the situation without having an interpersonal relationship that can be gained through communication and personal reflections. As one crew manager said: ‘I am learning more about myself and leadership thinking from our conversations and meetings. I never stop thinking about these issues. They are very important and hold the truth for leadership at sea’. Or as another seafarer points out: ‘Aesthetic helps and aesthetic elevates you and helps you go far in the world. In our work, without discussing aesthetic we undermine the aesthetic issues and we use our aesthetic knowledge to understand and influence people’. If this aesthetic inquiry by offering a ‘sensible knowledge’ grounded on aesthetic experience of seamen can be used to improve understanding among shipboard crew, enhance the morale of a beaten or depressed workforce, without creating false hopes or wishful delusions, and if it can be used to reduce the number of sea accidents, then this is worthwhile, or, at any rate, it is a valid area of investigation.

I believe that this interpretive study on leadership from the perspective of aesthetic experience of seamen is important and meaningful for its participants. Feelings of the beauty of their surroundings help seamen to survive and perform at sea. Emotional responses of seamen proclaim the healing powers of aesthetic experience on board. ‘Human beings differ from machines because of their emotions and feelings. When we are satisfied with our work and with each other: crew from Captain and Captain from his crew, when everything is going well in loading and

discharging you feel a burst of energy. My main purpose is to make people satisfied with their job and encourage them to feel happy and feel joy in order to leave the vessel with positive memories, with the feeling that they learned something new and acquired experience. People always appreciate your support and your responsible relationship of them', says one captain.

Leadership is increasingly becoming located within the system, rather than merely associated with an exceptional individual, the leader-as-hero who possesses certain kinds of traits or knowledge, like the power to influence others. Leadership becomes a process of negotiation where by using verbal or non-verbal communication it comes into being. As one captain says, 'When I began my career as a captain, my mentors asked me what the most difficult thing at sea was. I told them it was the safety of sailing under difficult conditions. They replied 'No'- the most difficult thing is the people. No matter how good a captain you are – with knowledge and experience – without people you are nothing. As a Russian saying goes: "One man in battle is not a soldier." It is an art being able to pass on your knowledge and thoughts to your people'. This view includes the notion that the role of the captain-leader demands an ability to read a situation, and as Shotter (1995) points out, to also render a linguistic formulation for what is to be done.

This study argues that people in positions of responsibility in organisations must be artistic experts in the poetics of conversation. As one seaman put it, 'sometimes badly timed spoken words are more dangerous than gunshots. Especially at sea, where people are isolated and very stressed, there needs to be an aesthetically and culturally educated man at the helm'; 'people are hungry for one good word.' The aesthetics of relationship and communication become very important and essential for the forging of relationships among crew members under conditions of risk, cold, lack of home comforts, stress and isolation. They turn out to be crucial to leaders under some of the most severe of all working conditions.

If we want to create more beautiful organisations and encourage people to act more beautifully, there must first be a place to discuss organisational aesthetics within organizations and make that discourse possible.

## ***4.5 Conclusion***

The interpretive study on leadership through aesthetics and linguistic artifacts illustrates that in most of our everyday practical activities we rely on our senses and develop intuitions we can trust. When important issues arise, regardless of what others may say, our own senses and intuitions are our best guides for action.

Aesthetic knowledge gained by seamen through practical judgments (phronesis) becomes most critical at sea and this was born out strongly in my interviews. Practical understanding, according to Wittgenstein (1953) 'consists in seeing connections': between aspects of our surrounding circumstances, between ourselves and others, and between action and sense (Geertz, 1983).

We are always making judgments based on sensation and aesthetics. We perceive through the senses, and the judgement is produced and reproduced by organisational actors. 'In essence, this means focusing on responsive dialogue and the relational moments in which we try to shape and make sense of our surroundings' (Cunliffe, 2002). It resides in the visual, the auditory, the touchable, the gustatory and olfactory, and generates dialectical relations with action.

The most important things in our live are our feelings, aesthetic sensibilities, moral practices, and spiritual awareness. These are purely subjective. None of these is purely rational or objective. As one seaman puts it, 'Yes, we are working for money but the feeling and emotional satisfaction is greater than material one. I am looking for beauty in my surroundings, because it is important, not to feel like a mechanism for earning money but to see and enjoy the beauty around us. Beauty ennobles people. As people say, 'beauty will save humanity'... I love my work very much. My work gives me a lot, means a lot for my emotional life.' By this measure, aesthetic experiences are more important than supposedly objective experience (Csikszentmihalyi and Robinson, 1990).

Objectivity can be dangerous, because it misses what is most important and meaningful to individual people. Objectivity can be unfair, since it must ignore the

most relevant realms of our experience in favor of the abstract, universal, and impersonal. For the same reason, objectivity can be inhuman. There are no objective and rational means for getting at our feelings, our aesthetic sensibilities.

‘There is wisdom that is not rational but poetic’, writes Giambattista Vico (1725), and ‘it is rooted in those relations which are not “reasoned” but nevertheless bind us to surrounding reality. Aesthetic knowledge based on the emotional and often sentimental responses with the main motif of human belonging helps people make sense of their lives. The most frequent feelings they described are inspiration, love and respect that give them a sense of harmony.

The language of the imagination, especially metaphor, is necessary for expressing the unique and most personally significant aspects of our experience. Art and poetry transcend rationality and objectivity and put us in touch with the more important reality of our feelings and intuitions. We gain this awareness through imagination rather than reason. ‘Thus, poetic forms of talk do not give us information about an already structured situation but help us form or constitute for the very first time, a way of orienting toward or relating ourselves to our surroundings and the circumstances of our lives’ (Shotter & Cunliffe, 2002).

This interpretative study illustrates that the way an individual is present in a situation is in itself an intimate ‘knowing’ or ‘understanding’, an ‘intelligence’ with which (s)he shapes actions.

#### ***4.6 Reflections***

- Those who exercise leadership on merchant marine ships (captains, chief engineers, first officers) have strong views on the importance of understanding aesthetics and emotions in discharging their responsibilities.
- Aesthetic knowledge gained by seamen through practical judgments (phronesis) helps people make sense of their lives and becomes most critical at sea.

- Feelings about the beauty of their surroundings seem to be enormously important to the seafarers. Harmony is clearly very important to them, - harmony both in the living conditions and in their relationship.
- In order to give meaning to their lives and work people need to have 'real' relationships: love with pathos, feeling of responsibility for their fellows.
- Interacting human relationships create a new form of aesthetic knowledge – relational aesthetics.
- A relational aesthetic makes communication 'real'. The relationships they build at sea are works of art, created through human interaction.
- This study argues that people in positions of responsibility in organisations must be artistic experts in the poetics of conversation, which can make conversation more 'real'.

## Appendix: Interview transcripts

### *Interview with Crew Member Oleg Monashev*

30.12.2004

Oleg has been working for 'Samos' shipping company for 10 years (6 contracts). He started as a wiper and for the last 4 contracts he has been an electrician.

Oleg -

We share our feelings, emotions with crewmembers in our joy and in sorrow. When somebody has difficulties we try to support each other. It is not always possible and not everyone is allowed to do this. In their majority, people differ from each other. They have different expectations and the most importantly that they have a different level of spiritual development, different backgrounds. Some of them are still romantic or he does not allow this feeling to die, because it is very important. Some times when you are on the deck and observing the sunrise and sunset, which you cannot see from home, it is a special feeling. And I am sorry that my family and my friends did not see this and cannot understand this feeling.

Some others come to the vessel only for money and a relationship with them is according to their expectations. If a seaman just works and has nothing else except his job and does not develop spiritually, we will go crazy to some degree. We miss the warmth and comfort of home and we have nostalgia about our parents, children and wife. And if we cannot find small joys around us, when we are in new countries we learn new things and then we have something to tell when we return home. As people say 'there is something to remember but nothing to tell'.

For example, I like a storm at sea. We often encounter storms and typhoons. Yes, there is rolling and pitching and even the most experienced and strong seamen suffer from the difficult/harsh weather. But I like stormy sea. It is wonderful. The stormy sea has magnificence. I am looking for beauty in my surroundings, because it is important to feel not like a machine earning money but to see and enjoy the beauty around us.

There are problems and difficulties when we return home. And for all the problems that have gathered in my absence I need to decide and find a solution and there is no time to see what is going on around you, no time as people say to 'raise head'.

My work gives me a lot, means a lot for my emotional life/ world. At the same time I like loneliness, probably from habit. We live in closed (isolated) environment and we get tired of each other, no matter how good or bad the crew is or what your relationship with people is. I like to be alone 2-3 hours a day, to look at the waves and to listen the roaring of the sea.

I would not say that I am a romantic. Sometimes I say to myself 'Oleg, romanticism has died inside you'. Everything depends on our mentality and our complexes. Some people who have a complex try to hide their feelings while others are more liberated. When you are open it is easier to live because people face you as you are. There is

no confusion or misunderstanding in your relationships, misconception from your behaviour and the relationship is relevant. But this comes with life experience.

Many times I hear 'Oleg, when you are so open with your colleagues, it is easy to be hurt by them.' Yes sometimes I understand that others can use/ take advantage of your feelings or play on your feelings. Then my first reaction is to become closed, like the saying 'closed in my shell'; sometimes I just tell them my opinion 'Think, if what you are saying or doing is nice' and if there is no change or no improvement in his behaviour I close up to this person.

On the vessel we are in isolated space and if conflict arises then the tense atmosphere creates strained relations. Nobody wants or needs this, of course – I mean clever people – because there are different people on board. This is my opinion. I say this because I am not Captain or Chief engineer; I have a lower rank and I can see between different layers. The crew are always differentiated not by position or by salary, but by their interest and mental development. Sometimes people lose some things because of this life and this creates complexes for him. And he is not confident about his behaviour. But he meets somebody with whom he can communicate. Everyone tries to see others through himself, how he would behave in a given situation, and if he finds positive aspects, he tries, as the saying goes 'to wear this dress', to adopt it and depending on this he builds his relationship. This is my personal opinion. I'll always say what I am doing. For example, I look at what I can learn from other people, because there isn't a good library on the vessel. For your spiritual development sometimes you want to read a good book, and you cannot go to the library. There is a lack of information. Then you find men from whom you can learn and share with them what you can give them. For example, I know a lot about history, another knows better geography or something else. From these discussions you learn a lot. And if you find someone with your level of intellect you like him... I know my character, my positive and negative sides. For example, if there is some conflict, I observe how people behave and I try to put myself in this situation and then I evaluate their behaviour. I think 'in that situation I would say 'That's it' and then will think 'why?' But this man was cleverer, he did not say anything or he said only one word and it was enough'. This is why people are divided into different layers and groups.

When you form relationships, as usual, you look at what they are doing in their every day life and how they are living. Normally people have families, interests and hobbies. For example, now I am inspired by fishing because I like to be in nature more often. In my last contract, one seaman told me that he goes to nature with his family and he gave me this idea because I was more pragmatic, there were many problems and I did not think about it before. Now I think that relationship with family and with nature sublimates people. At Christmas I went with my wife to the Christmas Mass and I did not like it.

I am from Moreoupol. It is a Ukrainian city-port with a multicultural population. Now we have political and religious problems between the Russian and Ukrainian-speaking population. My father is from central Russia and I grew up in Donbass (Ukraine) with my grandmother. I do not have a problem with the Ukrainian language and culture – I know it very well – but when I am travelling on the vessel

through Kiev (Ukraine) I don't feel safe, because I have a Russian nationality. But all this is irrelevant to our subject.

I will start from the engine department because it is closer to me. The Chief engineer is our chief, commander, and he is the boss in the engine room. There are different people, a different education, and a different approach to subordinates. If one before giving orders makes it clear what he wants, and explains or when a subordinate makes a mistake he tries to help, correct, or remind him – this is definitely a leader. Why? Because people will follow him and will not be afraid to tell him their problems and to admit their mistakes. People understand their fault and they know that after scolding there will be help and teaching – these are winning manners of real leaders.

There are people, who simply do not see the human side of their subordinates. For them they are working power – that's it. This is the beginning of the conflict in a relationship. Yes, of course he gives orders and even if he is not right, you eventually go to do your work. I consider telling him my opinion, this is what I will do, how I react. But conflict has already arisen. And not only with me, because I am like this, but conflict also arises with other subordinates, in spite of the rank – if they are officers or crewmembers. People know that they must say 'Yes sir' and get to work. This arouses people's indignation. Discussions between crewmembers begin, as does the formation of groups and layers to discuss their problems: 'yes, today I was hurt...' I will tell to my colleagues, crewmembers or petty officers in my rank and they will support me morally.

- Can you discuss this problem with your boss, chief engineer?

For me, now it is on the level of fantasy. In old times (before 1996) I worked in Azovsky Shipping Marine. There, the Chief engineer and the Captain were really caring and interested in their crew's opinion. He cares – why are you not looking very well today?'; and this *why* does not mean 'may be you got drunk yesterday', but he is really aware: How are you? How is your family? Is everything going well? Do you feel healthy? He was also aware of your emotional and moral health. My father-in-law was this kind of Captain. In stormy weather he went round the crew cabins to see and ask them how they felt, if they needed any help; he supported them morally.

Now times have changed and people have changed, of course, not all of them. Maybe, they have not had enough life experience. Because life obliged them, they earn this money with difficulty and they look at people as working power, I do not want to say with harsher words.

- Oleg, how do you feel?

They look at people as working beasts, you are a slave, you come here to work and you are paid for this and be nice; if not, I will send you home in the next port with your expenses. Already this... As people saying, there are people who 'on others' bones will build the bridge to the way of paradise'.

There are others who are working their first contract as a captain and they are starting to build their confidence. They look at you with icy eyes. For them you simply do not exist as a person. I have experienced this feeling many times.

When I was young I went to juniors' Marine club. It was difficult to get into the Marine Academy. And secondly, I was obliged to work, as I was the oldest child in my family, after graduating the college. I did in different jobs but I could not support my family.

My father-in-law, who was a Captain, suggested that I embark, seamen always earned better money, and I accepted it with pleasure. I had a warning from others that 'you have already have your steady habits and it will be difficult for you to stay far from your family for a long period of time'. I took the risk and now I cannot imagine myself without this profession. I like my work. Staying far from the daily routine, of course, not for so long period, as our contracts usually are - 8 months, but 4-5 months is excellent, it is good for everyone. Your family misses you and you miss them, you are not fed up with daily routine of relationships. Routine can kill feelings and people after some period of time become indifferent to each other. Yes, you know that you have obligations to your family, but the daily routine makes you feel like a machine. When you are at sea and you stay far from your family they become closer and more valuable to you, you understand how much they mean to you. The beauty sublimates people.

When you are at work, sometimes you have a hard day, something goes wrong. People are people. Some of them have been working with you for 8 months and you will not hear a bad word from him ever. To some others after 2-3 months, as I say, 'something is moved in his brain'. He becomes nervous for any reason, and says harsh things to you and he knows very well that he is not right, but his negative emotions govern him. Everyone requires individual approach, because people are different. Sometimes you simply do not pay attention or do not take seriously his harsh words, because you know that these are his emotions, and you forgive him. Later on when you meet him you just ask him 'is everything o'kay?' Definitely I love my work very much. Sometimes I return tired from the contract but it can happen – to whom hasn't this happened? In spite of this, I love my work.

- How important is it for you who is your captain and chief engineer?

I was working with captain Cotov; it was a very hard (from the aspect of work) contract. Till now I remember with pleasure the time when I was working with him. He is a very correct and very polite man. As the saying goes, sometimes you need to show that you did not see that someone made small mistake. He is this kind of Captain. He will make-believe that he did not see but you as an adult, will feel ashamed that you bring this kind of man in difficult situation and only this plays a very important role in the process of education. From his human relationship you learn very much. Each Captain has many more responsibilities and difficulties on board than any of us but Cotov never shows that he had a difficult time and in spite of this he was always supportive. When you go to him with your problems, let it be economic or daily routine one, you will always receive support and help and already this makes you feel, as people say, 'that you would go to fire and water for this man'. It is his simplicity, his humanity that wins your heart. Looking at him you

understand that he is human as you and immediately he attracts you, and you strive after him.

But when the man is unapproachable like a rock, and he has so much pride for his position, that he thinks that immediately he must start to smoke a pipe, and always be very serious and he is so puffed up with conceit that to all your questions he will turn hard and answer with arrogance. Only these manners and his behaviour from the stranger's side, even if you do not know him, maybe he is from other crew, this first look most of the time become true. You look at him and think: 'No, I would not like to work with him; he is too inaccessible for the people'. And I think that last period this is real misfortune.

Of course, with a Captain like Cotov, you feel that first of all he faces you as a personality. This happened with me when directly after contract on "Brahms" I was sent on the other vessel to work with Cotov and I thought that company was not fair with me. For three months, Cotov sent telexes to the company concerning my request. The answer, of course, was negative but I was surprised that I asked him once and every time when we met with Cotov on the bridge he informed me that he had sent again telex about my request. He did tenacious efforts and he was not afraid that he would be black-listed by the company. I respect Cotov as a person and I respect him as my Captain.

There are masters who are just administrators, but a real Captain first of all must be a psychologist, he must lead his crew and people will strive after him, and will trust this kind of Captain till the end. Yes, we are working for money. When you are in working place the stimulus is a normal human treatment and human relationship, that's it, you need nothing else. That is as in good, peaceful family. At least in my family everything is based on trust to each other and an honest relationship. We do not need more, when we believe we are in good relationship with others, and we do not need stimuli. People of my age (38 years and older) are still living with spiritual ideals. Materialistic relations, as I say, which come with capitalism, look at our young generation...they need light, kindness, care for our parents, and care for each other, for colleagues. Sometimes people of my age do not understand, when I give something to my friends, they say 'why did you give it and not sell it'. Not because I am so nice, but feelings and emotional satisfaction are more important than material ones.

As the saying goes, 'Even a dog likes a good word'. When in the work you fix some damage, you are already satisfied with the result of your work, but money is not so important as the chief engineer or Captain saying 'well done'. It is a pleasure when your boss acknowledges your work. It seems that you are already mature and you have seen so much in your life but after hearing good words you feel very good and a warmth in your heart and your respect for this person (meaning the chief or captain) grows and even if later on something goes wrong, you will forgive him; even if he is not fair with you, you will always find an excuse for him: 'maybe he was tired, or he has some problems, maybe he was nervous for some reason'. It has happened to me in my practice. I was suffering the dignity from Captain, who besides me with anger and I was proving my right professionally. I had reached the end, and I had decided to prepare my suitcase to leave the vessel at the next port because the request was standing very seriously for me. The Chief engineer for 1

hour was defending me to the Captain, because they can speak from the same position. And for the first time in my life, the Captain came to me and apologised for being angry with me and for his harsh words. I was shocked by this, up to then I thought bad things about him but after that I was worked 2 contracts with this Captain. He is a wonderful man.

I came across Greek Captains but I did not work with them on a contract. Many of the people who had worked with Russian and Greek Captains, say that they do not want to work with Russian Captains anymore. They say that it is easier and more pleasant to work with Greek Captains because they have more human relationship with their crewmembers. They will never make you feel that they are using you, or they do it so nicely that you do not feel being used. You do not have this bad feeling. I am for the first time in Greece and I feel that Democracy here is fruitful. People feel free here. All people need this.

Real Captains, good leaders are exceptional people. Now priorities have changed. They say: 'People can always be replaced, we need to care about vessel. But the vessel has no soul. People have become like robots now. They turn off their desire to develop spiritually, to learn to be compassionate. It is rare now. The main wish is where and how to earn more money. Honest and trustful relationships are not common today. People have become closed in their shell. Sometimes when people ask me something and I begin to tell them honestly the truth they look at me like 'how foolish you are' and they are shocked by my openness but it is easier for me to live like this. He knows what he can expect from me and build his relationship with me from this point. Also at work when it is needed I work hard and the chief engineer sees how I work. But, give me a chance to have a rest, when there is no real work. I am not a robot; I cannot keep on working without stopping. Like all normal people I also need rest. When the Chief engineer says: 'Are you tired?' and you answer: 'yes, I am tired' he says: 'Ou~...' This also shows that he does not see you as a human being'.

In this company there are good traditions when somebody has his birthday the cook bakes a birthday cake for dinner and even if there was some conflict, every crewmember comes and wishes you happy birthday. This mobilises people very much. When the cook is good and he tries to serve nice food it is very pleasant for all the crew. Celebrations, the New Year and barbecues also mobilise people.

My first contract in this company was extended to 10 months. The crew was so good, so close to each other, everyone helped and cared for each other that I did not understand how time passed so fast. Work was work but we had also rest. I could not imagine that it would be possible in a western shipping company to have a Captain and chief engineer, and all crew as a one family. Everyone was kind to you, discussed things with you. This was very pleasing.

Sometimes you have worked for only 1 month and it seems that you are already 4-5 months on board. Time does not pass. Morale is not good, people are angry. And sometimes 4-5 months passed and your contract is nearly ending and you have a very good time with crew. It is always different.

If the Captain or Chief engineer does not properly treat their crew, people will try to avoid them, they will just execute their orders, but they will not see a leader in their face. Then they will look for a leader in someone else from the crew. There are always 1-2 people after whom people strive regardless of their position. Of course, the ideal is for the Captain to be the leader of his crew.

Let's get back to the kind word from the Captain and Chief engineer. It all depends on how this word has been said. For example, for me, with kind word, as the saying goes, 'I am ready to climb a mountain'. Sometimes I was supported by the Captain and Chief, but there were times when the opposite happened when in the end I was right, but I heard many harsh words and faced indecent, improper behaviour from my boss which hurt me very much. And when from the company the answer was that your electrician was right, the answer from the side of Captain and Chief was simply silence.

As a human, all I want is for him to simply say 'Yes, Oleg, you were right.' I do not want you to say sorry, I know where your position is and where mine is, but I have heard so much from you, and it was not fair and even now you do not want to acknowledge my rightness. Sometimes a kind word is more valuable, it means more than thousands of dollars. To acknowledge his fault, a person needs guts, I passed this by myself.

It is very important, not to hurt people, because degrading a human being is not permitted. And this must come from the heart and not from the mind. Maybe some of my truth will help in developing human relations, which recently has been forgotten and not only in shipping but everywhere in everyday life. If there is still hope that something can help in overcoming that gap between good old relationships I will be happy. Sometimes against our moral principles we decide in favour of rationalisation. When people say: 'now, this is the life', I do not agree with this. People always, in every situation must remain humans. First and foremost we are humans. People must be honest with themselves and others. The most fearful judge is your conscience. And if your conscience is clear then you feel happy.

As people say, 'beauty will save humanity'. Seeing the beautiful things in your surrounding being in touch with this beauty can change your outlook of other things. The more beautiful things, images you have received in your life, from your childhood, the easier it is to live with this in the future.

And in your work, if the Captain and Chief engineer treat you well, they can influence you; you become a better person after that contract. It happened with one of my friends. After one contract, where the Captain and others were very polite and kind to him, he developed aesthetically, he became more polite with his family, he changed his manners and I was surprised and pleased when I saw these changes.

Not everyone can become Captain. When I trust a Captain, I place my life and my family's life in his hands.

In the vessel we are under the same 'harness' ...

- If the core of the problem is rooted in an aesthetic dimension, ignoring the aesthetic dimension will result in a solution that ends up being instrumentally ineffective because it does not address the root cause.

In order to fully understand the depth and meaning of the issue it also needs to be looked at from the perspective of the person with whom the conversation is being held. When applied to a group of people, such as the crew, things become even more complicated as each individual looks at the issue from their own perspective.

Levels of understanding can differ greatly. A degree of freedom must be achieved, whereby the speakers are under no hierarchical pressure in order for personal views to be fully expressed. Ideas can hence be shared, leading to a greater possibility of achieving a solution or agreement.

However, due to a certain current tendency by individuals to be withdrawn, it is difficult to open up their souls and verbalise their thoughts. Because, nowadays, to make someone talk, you need to awaken...their consciousness. To the individual, rationality is what brings emotional finality to any decision.

This is a true story. The Chief engineer had a serious problem with the Captain. According to the words of the friend he (the chief engineer) was an intelligent and educated man. When leaving the Captain's room he turned and passionately said: 'In some years I will become a Captain but you will never become a Chief engineer'. After 8 years the Chief engineer became a Captain. Upon greeting each other, the Captain said: 'What are you doing here?' The Chief answered: 'I am going to an official meeting as a Captain'. Years before he wanted to prove he was right and he wanted to know how it is possible not to understand elementary things. This finally played a role his decision to become a Captain. The people who were working with him said what a wonderful Captain he was, and how pleasurable it was to work with him, as he can understand a problem in its entirety, and how difficult it is sometimes for engineers to prove that they are right.

Here, in the engine room, human feelings flare up. The work in this area is very difficult and this is not the most important thing. We come down to the engine room in the morning, we work together the whole day and here we live together.

On the bridge there are 4 shift deck officers, one after another and the Captain who works alone. For as long as I have been working on board the ship the engine department is always the most united part of the crew. When the Chief engineer comes to the engine room in his white boiler suit and it is reeking with oil, this gives you the feeling that this man does not hesitate to do the work which everyone else does. This makes you respect him more and it does not matter if he was only handing you tools. You can see and understand that he respects your work and he tries to help, he is not indifferent and he supports you even with the small things.

It is very hot in the engine room, and when we perform repairs, the chief engineer offers the engine team cold drinks because he cares about us, about his people. This happens in my practice. There were disagreements between the Captain and one of the engineers, during one of which the Chief engineer said to the Captain: 'do not touch my people. If there are any problems, call me and we can discuss them to see

if any staff is at fault. We will then call him and decide if it is necessary to punish him'. After this the engineer said: 'I thought that the Chief was not fair with me. But now, I will go through fire and water for him'.

The vessel was divided between the bridge and the engine room since the vessel uses steam engine propulsion. A clever man will always listen to the opinions of others. However, the Chief engineer's opinion is no less important. We are in the same vessel, and we must therefore take into consideration all the positive and negative sides of the situation. I may have forgotten something, missed something, or maybe I did not take something into consideration. We work in the same 'harsh environment', we co-exist and we must understand each other. Thinking of who is most important is not the most vital thing to do.

Definitely, if the Captain is good it is the ideal model, because even if the Chief engineer is very good but the Captain is not proper, this can change the entire atmosphere on the ship.

- Conflict and disagreement can improve decision-making.

There is an old proverb: 'From controversy we learn the truth'. If many problems pile up to which there are no solutions, then there will come a particular moment when they can blow up. In old times we had "final meetings" every month during which everyone could state their problems. Usually meetings were held by the departments. After that we had a final ship meeting during which people could relieve their pent up energy. If there is no place to relieve the pressure there will be crises, as depressed people cannot adequately react to arguments. To relieve a 'pressured steam' in small doses could be good for people. I know this from my own experience. When during work meetings people come together to discuss their problems, which are a cause of pain to them, this results in a great deal of vociferating. Usually after these meetings, relationships between people become smoother. If the right moment was lost when the situation could be improved, the break becomes bigger. And not only between people (crew members) but also if the Captain has lost the window of opportunity, all people become strangers to each other and it is very difficult to work, as the crew do not form a team any longer.

Sometimes people do not understand the word Aesthetic. The meaning of the aesthetics of a relationship is not conceivable. This is not a usual word for me either. To my understanding it means correct and proper relationships, respect not only for yourself but also for others, and the attempt to make communications pleasurable for each party. This is my understanding. You can try through your relationships, your manner and your behaviour, as well as with your word and tone, which could dictate a prepossessing appearance to others. When you meet new people, you listen firstly to their manner of speaking. Then you can see and understand their relation to you, and depending on how you perceive them the first time, you then build your future relationship with this person.

Aesthetic perceptions need to be fostered. If companies want to create their own stem of loyal people, the two most important positions, with big power, must possess a proper education and training. It is not enough to have a professional theoretical knowledge, as above all they must have an aesthetic education.

Sometimes the destiny of other people depends on these two men: the Captain and the Chief engineer. If these people are educated not only professionally but also aesthetically, then many mistakes can be predicted and conflicts can be avoided. I am not very knowledgeable in this area but I think that it is necessary. There should be courses comprising knowledge in human relationships, the aesthetics of the relationship between crewmembers. People say, 'Human souls as well as bodies should be beautiful'.

There is saying that 'the biggest test is through power', and I know what this means. People who are not morally and aesthetically educated enough can damage, emasculating others. Especially at sea, where people are isolated, they are very stressed and in order to normalise the situations by relieving feelings and defusing crisis there needs to be an aesthetically and culturally educated man at the helm. The aesthetics of relationships and communication becomes very important under the specified conditions of risk, lack of home comforts and warmth, stress and isolation.

- Catching the harmonious aspects of reality through representations of the beauty of the organisations.

For instance, when are crossing the Equator or approaching archipelagos, the Deck officers could announce the fact to the crewmembers, stating simply: 'We are passing islands which are famous...' They are educated in navigation and could easily give the additional information during the breaks. This will increase our interest, and when people go up on deck they will feel different. They will feel, in fact, that they are not only working but also travelling there.

- The role of the human agency in creating a positive 'spirit of the place' in residential organisations.

This is a true story. On one of the vessels off of which the Chief was disembarking, and onto which I was remaining, when leaving the engine room and saying goodbye to his team, he turned, looked at us with nostalgia, and said: 'Oh my God, how much work, energy and emotions we have invested in this place. And this is all ours. Honestly, I feel that I am leaving home, 'my heart bleeds'. I liked his words and as he looked at the engine room, we were in reality one peaceful family. The vessel was our home.

If a home atmosphere is created, where people feel that they are not in army barracks performing military services, they can feel the comfort of a home, which is native to them, and where they are surrounded by care and awareness. I do not know how to express myself, but we would like to feel that we are not always in the working place, and that we can also feel some home comfort. For instance, when I go down to the engine room which is where I work, I want to feel I am at home when I am up on deck, where I can find comfort and warmth. But this is mostly in the hands of the company.

Of course, it can only work if from the very beginning the company gives the initiative to the Captain and the Chief engineer, who have the power, and if they can be the persons who influence people and people trust them. For people in position of power the company must upgrade the following qualities: humanity and relationship

aesthetics. Sometimes incorrectly timed spoken words are more dangerous than gunshots.

### *Interview with Captain Arkady Savin*

17.01. 2005

Our work is not easy; it's quite dangerous and stressful. We work at least 12 hours a day and at times even more. At night, the only thing people feel is great tiredness and need to rest. This is our daily routine. Sometimes I try to ease their work schedule so they can rest in between work. We sometimes shift the working time from 8-8 to 6-6 so they can have more free time in the evening.

For our free time we have a recreation room which has exercise machines and where they can play table tennis. People can also watch movies, listen to music, play board games, others prefer to go to their rooms and a book. The company offers the officers Internet access so they can send and receive e-mails from their families. It is no secret that there is a lot of bureaucracy involved when we are preparing for port authorities-we spend one day on discharging and one on loading- and most times we have no time to get off board. Very often and when possible, I try to allow crew members to leave the ship, even for a few hours.

Very often we also go through surveys one after the other. If I feel that the crew is very tired after a stressful and long day, I may even allow a drink, once every 2-3 months.

This company cares about its seamen. If someone or their family needs help, they show interest.

I am going to a ship that I know and the crew knows me, so I am calm and people know that if they don't know something, I will teach them. The captain has the last word. Of course, there are times when I don't know something and I ask my chief officer. However, young officers do not have as good training as we did. After 25 years, I still remember what was taught. If my young assistants don't know something, I tell them to do it like I do. In such cases, you shouldn't punish someone for not knowing something- all you need is willingness to learn. A young officer needs to continue his education when he goes on a ship. There are navigation books to help him. If the ship is big and it has a lot of work, there is little time left for education. Of course, when it is time for the officers to renew their certificates, they need to study.

The relationship between a captain and his crew depends on both sides and people have different characters. It is difficult to explain what makes this relationship work. I can't say I have an amicable relationship with everyone. Sometimes, you can't avoid a confrontation with someone. If my people are smiling, I know everything is alright. But if I see their faces gloomy, I try to find out the reason for this. Unfortunately, you are sometimes forced to fire someone. I regret having to do this. I've only had to do this three times in 25 years and I always tried to give them enough warning and chances before letting them go.

The aim of our work is to bring profits to the company. Our daily work is to keep the ship in good condition-to paint, clean or repair it.

Of course, people can't work without emotion. How can someone do a job they didn't like? If I didn't like my job here, I wouldn't work here. But there are many who work because they need to support their families, whether they like it or not, and emotion comes second. There are also cases where people don't want changes. In this company I earn less than I could elsewhere but I like it here. I have been many years in this company, 6 years, and I know the company and I trust it. And, of course, I have an emotional bond with my work and the people in it.

In practice, everything is more difficult so if someone one of my seamen is upset by someone, perhaps a chief officer or chief engineer, I don't think it's proper for me to intervene. I will give my opinion to the chief engineer if he is responsible, but I cannot tell him to apologize. Perhaps next time he will correct his mistake. At times, you have to replace one of the two, usually the seaman, but I have never had to. If both are good professionals this will have a negative impact on our work. I will try to speak to them to calm them down and in such situations you need to be a diplomat and a psychologist.

If we have disagreements, the final resort is to make a decision. Either I make the decision myself and tolerate no disagreement- if it is a critical situation and there is no time for discussion- or, if we have time, I raise the matter for discussion and try to solve it together. When we need to make navigational measurements, my assistant and I sit at our separate computers and then compare the calculations. At times, when my younger assistants' opinions differ from mine, it causes me discomfort. Sometimes I try to persuade them, at others I simply order them. The chief officer is usually young and when the problems are minor, I explain to them why something must be done so and I teach it to them so that a minor problem does not turn into a major one. If there are any doubts about the best course of action, then I discuss this with my assistants-if there is time. It all depends on the situation. There were times when they were right and I told them so. My office is always open and they can all come in.

Meals are eaten separately- officers and crew. This break is usually short as we don't have much time, but if we do have time I go to the crew and wish them a good meal and ask if they are enjoying it.

Everything I have described to you is our everyday reality, which is different from the theory. If we don't discuss the difficulties, they escalate.

The aesthetics of relationships...People need to feel satisfied. People with similar interests group together. It is very positive that Russian seamen like to read books. Of course, everything depends on their education and upbringing. It's very pleasant to meet again people with whom I worked well. A seaman always develops professionally and emotionally at sea. There is a saying that a trip went by "like your soul singing"- in a breath – very quickly because everything went smoothly. In reality, most of our life is spent at sea. I am so organized in my mind that I sometimes feel like a mechanism. Perhaps I am not expressing myself correctly but this is how I feel.

Russian crews now have a good reputation so there is no problem in finding work.

Simply caring about people and human relationships is better than anything else—even giving someone some time to rest if he is tired after a hard day's work. So they can feel comfortable. This gives people the chance to live in harmony. People always understand true caring and appreciate it. They sign contracts and know their duties and it's up to me to make their lives as pleasant and as comfortable as possible.

***Interview with Chief Engineer  
Peter Covsh***

*17.01.2005*

The vessel is our home – ‘sweet home’...

We must follow the principles. We must control and keep people's interest, keep their busy with work.

How I became seaman...I graduated from Marine College in 1976 in Leningrad (St. Petersburg). Before going to the vessel I was tested for communication skills and I passed the psychological test.

My first teacher signed my life, my career, and my working principles. I have learned a lot from him. We always learn from each other. At work you must demand and control. He taught me to check the engine every hour and I teach my assistant-engineers to do the same. It is very important who were your commanders and teachers. In the past it was a shame not to fulfil the work. You wanted to do your work well in order do not disgrace your chief engineer.

How I chose the profession of seaman. I wanted to avoid the everyday routine. And I loved the sea. I love my profession. Sometimes you come to the engine room and the engines are working and everything is clean and you have a feeling of peace and satisfaction from this feeling. I like the sound of the engine.

Conflict between the captains and the chief engineers... When the chief engineer puts himself higher then it tenses the situation, the relation between him and the captain. But when you say: ‘you are the boss and you are a commander’, then he feels relaxed. I have observed how people change. I know the captains, their weaknesses.

The first 1-1,5 month I organise my work, I examine and learn the whole vessel. The more you work, the more you learn and your work on this vessel becomes more interesting and later on I do my work as I want.

Care, awareness, and a kind word for people are necessary. Bonuses – even the small amounts are very pleasing for the seamen. Punishment – even the smallest amount of fine – has an effect on them. People are immersed in their work. The lack

of information on the vessel makes seamen imbibe any information. They grow with ups and downs (waves). Seamen are like children. They miss care and warmth.

Our contracts are 6-8 months. After four months the psychology of people falters, it becomes difficult. The next 5-6 months they tell you everything, they need to tell you their pain. At sea you need to listen the people. It is important not to be estranged from them, to listen to their confession.

But you must always remember that you are a leader and commander. The young officers (3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> engineers) like to drink with motorists who are older than them. If they start to drink with motorists then you lose control. There are always some of the crew members who will let you know about this. But this is negative behaviour and I pretend that I did not understand and later I call the officers and talk to them privately.

It is important to complete the work that has been started and control its accomplishment. The engine requires controlling at each step, each detail. I always control not only others work but also mine. One must recognize his mistakes. It comes with experience. Now I am not afraid to recognize if I was wrong.

In the beginning of the contract people complain that they are tired when you pressure on them. But later on they immerse themselves in the work. Sometimes in the engine room we work without a break if the situation demands it. People understand that we cannot avoid this work and they do not complain. In difficult situations people trust you and everyone strives after you and carry out to fulfil the work your requirements. People like to be the part of succeeding team.

On the vessel seamen give each other nicknames. It is important do not humiliate people. I need to keep the balance of the engine crew, do not have favorites. The work is the work. If you relax then you loose control. If you do not go down to the engine room every morning to control the situation then you can loose the rhythm of the work, you loose your control of the engine crew. Second engineer can take command but they usually hide the troubles (damages). Because the engine is the responsibility of the chief engineer I always must check and control. Everything is going well when everything is all right.

If there is a damage of the engine and you stay behind of your plans, people are stressed and it seems that they know everything but in that situations they are confused and feel lost. If my people made mistake I have never complain to the office. That's why they try hard to correct or fix the damage. First of all I investigate the problem and then I say to the captain: 'do not inform the office immediately'. When we have passed the stress and we investigate the problem and realize what happened then we can inform the office. If you support your people they always will try hard, will work over-time and without complains they will support you when it is necessary.

The seamen as everyone else have weaknesses. If you award them with kind word or give them small bonus they will try their best, they will do everything for you. As people saying 'show them kindness and win their hearts'. Many captains do not

realize that people on the vessel miss care and warmth and by giving them care and be aware to them you can win people's hearts.

Once the owner of the company visited the vessel and I was surprised when he wears the boiler suit and went down to the engine room and he saw the corroded frame and said: 'I can understand the wear and tear of the engine but how difficult it is to remove the rust'. I felt shame for the condition of my engine and for this comment.

You cannot feel indifferent for people with whom you are working and you cannot be indifferent what you are doing and how you are working. I am working at sea 24 years and since 1997 as a chief engineer.

People are satisfied and happy when you trust them. Some of them like to work in team, where they can work more relaxed. Some others can be good assistants but they have not initiative. When my assistants (the 2<sup>nd</sup> or 3<sup>rd</sup> engineers) have initiative, I leave them to do their work as they know but I always control them. At sea indifferent relationship cannot exist, it is impossible. We need to work in one breath in order to have a 'tuned engine'.

The vessel is a closed community. It is our home. We care about her (the vessel), we are painting and cleaning and when it is clean people like it. The vessel becomes warmer when we care about it and we must create the comfort in our environment and we say with proud: 'We made the vessel beautiful'. And when we were asked from the strangers in one of the Ports: 'How old is your vessel?' and we have answered '20 years old' they could not believe it because she (the vessel) was in very good condition and was looking younger.

The cabins of the seamen can be abandoned but I always demand from them to keep it clean. Unfortunately, there are some seamen who say: 'only because I am here I must be paid'.

The vessel is our home – 'sweet home'. The crew must understand and respect this. If you loose the moment...on the vessel control is very important. I know that my people like work with me. I am not indifferent to my people and to the work. Work at sea becomes our lifestyle. If you are working hard you have no time to think too much and the time passes easier. If you are relaxed you miss your family more. After contract the shore life is completely different. Everything changes. There are different relationships with people.

***Interview with Chief Engineer  
Alexander Beliayev***

*18.01.2005*

Alexander is 54 years old. He is a Chief engineer. And it is his second contract in this company.

Alexander:

Satisfaction from the job can be achieved only if you love your job. And when you love your job you try to obtain the result. Otherwise there are no aim, no result. If you are working in order to stay on the vessel, do not be fired, only to be paid, I think it is not possible to work like this.

Misunderstandings between people on the vessel are based on this. Some of them want to be satisfied with their work, others just spend their time. This relation to the work, this behaviour can be clarified in conflicts. One works with all his heart another do it without feeling and he says: 'I do not know what else he (the boss) wants from me. I have done my job.' If he does not love his job, he does not like it and he cannot understand what you ask of him. As boss I am not satisfied with his work and he is not satisfied because he thinks that I demand too much from him and that it is not fair. This is how unsettled work and misbalance are created.

Aesthetic relationship in our work...When a man does not like his work, or he is here (in this working place) by mistake, or he is lazy and when I try to explain him why we need to complete this work and he thinks that it is unnecessary or pointless, here the dialogue ends.

Sometimes when you try to explain something you need to give comparisons with subjects which are closer to them. For example, people from Siberia use such potentially rude metaphors that let you feel what they mean although it is not perceived as a bad word. They are culturally coloured.

To understand all this one needs to go through all the things I have passed as a seaman 34 years at sea. In the past professionalism was valuable and was accounted not by age but by experience. Relationship in engine room was different; relation to the work was different...more creative. Everyone was trying to do his work with all his heart and this relation was awarded.

The role of aesthetic in everyday life on the vessel...we always have it in mind, we undermine it but not discuss it. It is difficult to explain. People have different feelings of beauty. One has a more cultivated feeling and another less. People who had never been taught aesthetic may think that aesthetic is unnecessary that there is no need for aesthetic in the work.

Each holiday the crew are waiting and make preparations to have a holiday table, to assemble and communicate with each other, to have a feeling of the holiday.

There is also technical aesthetic in the work. Engines actually have the same function but the aesthetic experience is different. For example, an engine built in Japan is a piece of art. On the vessel with a Japanese engine you feel comfortable and relaxed and feel proud of working on this vessel. When it is built in Eastern German it is not worth 'spitting at'... The engine has a soul. I say to my subordinates, it is as a slovenly (snotty) child when you do not carry about it. And 'we do not live in a hole'.

Relations on shore and at sea are different. On the vessel you can somehow change the situation, influence it. You must be professional and with correct personality. But if you are a very bad person then even your professionalism cannot be helpful.

People always strive after similar people. Because when they do not like and do not feel comfortable they look for the people who understand them. In the engine department we had two engineers: the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> assistants were very intelligent and educated men. The electrician wanted their company but they rejected him, they could not accept him. His culture, his aesthetic was different.

When a young cadet comes to the vessel he is exploring himself. If he does not succeed once, twice then it is hard for him to stay on the vessel. Because if a seaman does not find himself then it is impossible, it is very difficult to stay.

Usually you plan your work but if the vessel is very old and needs many repairs, you feel that you leave your heart and soul. And it is very difficult to leave her (the vessel). We leave part of us on the vessel. Every seaman remembers the vessel where he was working, and always remembers her with love. How much time we spent and how we felt on the vessel, how much work we did and how much energy we invested there...

The ship is a female. When we talk about the vessel we say 'she'. Seamen are in love with the vessel and they are jealous. Once the Captain was leaving the vessel and he touched her with love and said: 'Marica-Maritsa (the name of the vessel), only you love me'.

Once, the previous chief engineer, when I was replacing him, asked me: 'Please, be aware of some repairs for the engine, which I could not complete'. And I understood that he was worried and cared about the vessel.

I came to the vessel, which was in bad technical condition. When it is possible to fix damages, then you have a great moral satisfaction from the result, you are aware and care and become more close to your vessel. Another time the vessel was technically unrepairable and you were watching how the engine was breaking in front of you. It is very disappointing and you leave this vessel with feeling pain and unfortunate.

You begin to love the vessel when you learn her and can control her and the more you learn about her the more you become attached to her, you bond with her.

It is very difficult to go to work and wait when your working hours and days will pass. It is almost impossible.

It is easier to work with people who generate positive energy, independently of their position. People who convey negativism without saying or doing something they put pressure on you. When you have a command from the leader (the Captain) in a correct form, everything is clear and under control.

Sometimes you cannot leave your job and you do it mechanically. After the working day you try to relax. Some people on the vessel speak to their computer. They give them names of their friends. Another likes to watch movies. These 1,5-2

hours you leave the vessel and sometimes you are fascinated by the plot, the actors and you do not want to come back to reality. Because people need change in their environment and want to see new faces. A closed environment creates inappropriate conditions. On the vessel we live with the same group of people 24 hours in the period of an 8month contract. When we are expecting new member on the vessel, all the crew has an interest for the new seaman at least for one week. He conveys fresh information and keeps the interest of others.

False note, dissonance in relationship is not accepted by the seamen. When your actions and words are in dissonance, you say and do different things. You feel hat he is not honest. You understand it from his character, from his stories, which he tells us. We understand that he conveys immorality. And seamen do not accept this man. A working environment with only men has its significance. And relationships must be laconic and straight. Our profession conveys and naturally chooses people with strong spirit and character. In good shipping companies the discipline and hierarchy is on a high level. Everything is in order. 'Please' is a command. Everything is in intonation. The colour of command is an aesthetic of communication. Marine culture demands commanding, as it must be. As in the movie 'Master and Commander' – these are the real relationships at sea. Captain has an authority and the vessel is a semi-military organisation. Discipline is a demand and appearance of anarchy is prohibited. Natural selection - 90% of seamen are possessed with all necessary capabilities.

Aesthetic helps and aesthetic elevates you and helps you go far in the world. In our work, without discussing aesthetic we undermine the aesthetic issues and we use our aesthetic knowledge to understand and influence people.

***Interview with Chief Engineer  
Vasily Tverdochlebov***

*19.01.2005*

We only run the vessel if it is in a good technical condition. And if we have professional seamen then psychological climate on the vessel is good. If my assistants are professionals and their work has come up to my expectations then I trust them.

There are situations when the vessel in a good technical condition and seamen are professionals but we cannot avoid the monotony of the work. It tyrannizes us, people feel nostalgia, and they miss their home and their families.

In addition to their professionalism and ambition for promotion, is an aim to reach and keep seamen alive. This is one way to keep people's interest.

Relationships between people depend on their professionalism and their individual qualities: relation to the work and relationships with people.

The vessel is as a tin. People know each other from head to toe: all the positive and negative sides of their character can be made very clear. Each seaman comes to the vessel with his own problems and based on this people behave differently.

We had cases of thieving and all crew demanded that the seaman disembark at the closest port. If a seaman does not have proper preparation he will be disembarked.

I was working with a Philipino crew. They execute their duties faithfully, but they are not professionals.

From 1980-1985 I was working for Czechoslovakian shipping company. Everything was under pressure and under cover. Until 1989-1990 we had a commissar on the vessel and we had political meetings.

Now the situation with terrorism and the execution of safety instructions, constructions and regulations is distracting us from the main work. Definitely it makes the situation more tense.

Conflict between the bridge and the engine department...Operational work requirements come from the company. The engine team is responsible for the engine. The specifications of our work are completely different. The deck team says: 'We need, the company demands.' And we make compromises or try technically to convince them. It also depends on the character of the people. Sometimes conflict can be created when we have no time for deciphering the problem, or conflict can be created when the chief engineer supports his people but the captain is very ambitious and rude.

At sea, the captain and the chief engineer are on duty 24 hours a day. And psychologically it is difficult; the tense situation can blow up emotions. We had cases of psychological break-downs. Usually it happens with a person who is very closed in himself. It is important to realize that you were wrong and try to correct your mistake and it is not even necessary to apologize, but try to fix the situation with your actions. The chief engineer and the captain appraise the crewmembers for their professionalism, communication skills and marine skills.

Now there are no romantics among seamen. When we see what is happening on shore after each contract we need about 1 month to adapt. Relationships on shore are changing. There is a lack of kindness, compassion, and trust between people.

People at sea have their own world and this world can be regulated from the higher command. All commanding team knows people (the crew) from their practice, everything is clear and can be seen.

If we do everything by the book then people will not be able to bear it. For people are good and in order to fix the engine we must be selective in what we must and can execute and what is prohibited. By considering our problems, the adaptation can go smoothly when man is a clever.

We have a different mentality from Greek seamen. As people say 'What is for Russians good is a bad for Germans.' By listening to both sides of the conflict the

cause of the problem may be solved. When you cannot convince people then you must use your power by giving orders. I listen to them carefully and make my decision.

There are situations when a crewmember supports his opinion by suggesting a more simple way. And I always reward this person. Cooperation is always helpful. This elevates his (the crewmember) confidence and I appreciate him more.

At sea people live together and get close and learn each other very well and usually they can foresee how to react in every given situation. If the conflict arises people become sulky and closed to themselves.

If the chief engineer or the captain was unfair in punishing the seaman, then we need to clarify and to apologize. There can be situations when under your emotional stress you say harsh words and hurt others. I say: 'Count till ten and when you cool off it will be easier to recognize if you are right or wrong.'

The deck crew are working together and spend their free time together. People get closed through the work. Engine crew does the same. They are more closed together than with the rest of crew. Among the deck crew and the engine crew people makes jokes. For example the deck crew says: 'your back is oily and you do not see the daylight. You are like this, and we are better.' But these are jokes – just confrontations.

Usually at sea people are fair to each other. If people have complaint about somebody then it means that the person is really not faithful and tries to avoid the work. The chief engineer and the captain are always discussing all the problems of the vessel. The routine work is carried out by their subordinates. On the vessel the discipline demands keeping distance between officers and the crew.

Fifteen minutes of coffee time plays a significant role. This is the time when all things are discussed by crewmembers. Here is a closed chain. I say to my people: 'I am your chief engineer but I cannot succeed without your support. The company demands from me and I require your support.'

The people observe you, your behaviour and they appraise it. It will be easier to cooperate in the future if you collect more positive marks from the beginning. Then aesthetic relationship builds up normally.

Once I was called to the vessel where I was shocked from the aesthetic condition of the engine room and the cabin of the previous chief engineer: all papers thrown around, darkness and a terrible smell in the cabin. And when the second engineer saw my reaction he said: 'do not try, do not make special efforts, everyone is leaving this vessel, no one can survive.' The vessel at the time was almost not running. I called all the engine team and I was forced to replace all engine crew in a two-month period. We (engine crew) made redecorations and repairs to our environments – in the engine room and in our cabins, because we work and live in this environment.

I have worked four contracts in this company and I am surprised and pleased how much attention the crew manager gives to the selection and allocation of the crew.

Our crew manager Korobkin loves his work very much. People are in the right positions. For him it is enough to discuss with the seaman, and it seems that he asks innocent questions but he can understand what kind of person he is. Some people say that he is very pedantic in doing this job but I think that he is a psychologist.

Now I am going to replace the chief engineer on a very big vessel. Captain Korobkin is worried and cares about the crew and the officers and it is very important.

### *Interview with Chief Officer Alexander Gomzyakov*

20.01.2005

Alexander worked in 'Samos' for 2 contracts in the position of Chief Officer. He has a Diploma of Captain and the company is testing him for the position of the Captain.

Alexander:

I am trying to live the role of captain. I am preparing myself not only technically but also I am thinking on the formulation of my style as a captain, which is not yet clearly formulated. I must communicate with crew and make them work. I am working on my style gradually and building it for the future.

I will be honest with you. On my previous vessels (contracts), I know, and people (crew) told me that they were waiting for me, and hoped that they would work with me. On another vessel, I know, and Victor Vasilievitch (crew manager) said, that I am rough with people. Some people do not understand that the situation demands this. My task is to demand and to force people to work because I am also required to do this from my ordinates. I always try to explain but not everyone can understand it. It depends on the level of education.

I will be precise. All aesthetic of our relationship is formulated from the specifics of our work. Yes, people are tired now, but in the end the preparation of the tanks in time will be valued. And all crew must understand that we are working towards it. During the process they can free their emotions, can fight, but we have instructions. I am underlying the material satisfaction, because it stimulates them. After the survey everyone will tell me how good Chief am I.

When we have a big volume of work, it is always better to explain, because they do not understand, why we need to do this work immediately, and cannot leave this for next week. It is very hard to explain, and make them all to understand the problem. The vessel is not an organisation for educating people. And if a man has not got the wish, it is very difficult to force him, but I can only give an order and punish. In order to develop yourself horizontally you need to have the wish to do so.

I heard from one Captain and I remembered what he said: 'If the 3<sup>rd</sup> Officer starts his work on the vessel and stops asking questions, to me he is a non-existing officer.' If somebody thinks that he knows everything then he stops his development.

How I control the emotional climate...if you understand in time the intensity of the situation and you can find out the cause of it, then you can call the seaman for open dialogue, to clarify the situation.

Sometimes my subordinates say: 'When you gave instruction your tone, your intonation was...very angry, not kind.' I could not understand how my intonation was because I did not even pay attention to it. But he (crew member), I don't know why, paid close attention to my tone of giving instructions. He was under stress and he started to think: 'Because he talked to me like this, he does not treat me well and he does not like me.' And this is only because he did not like my tone. And sometimes when I speak aloud, he (subordinate) thinks that I am shouting at him.

The intonation is an art, and you need to learn how to manipulate it. There are no special courses about aesthetic that's why we learn it on an emotional level. This is just your manner, your way of doing things, your behaviour, because I cannot do it in another way. Of course, I do not want to be rough, and I would not like my subordinates to think of me as rough, cruel in treating them. But I prefer to be tough in commanding. For me, tough command is strict and definite, clear in time, it is not loose command, it is solid. And in work, when you have contact, it all goes smoothly. Sometimes you need to simply explain because as Porthos (from 'Three musketeers') said: 'I am fighting because I am fighting.' If man has lost the responsibility then it can rise in savage and he will become not rough but cruel.

Emotions arise when we have a very hard and a big volume of work, when people do not sleep and they are very tired. Yes, this is the situation when the emotions blow up. Yes, I need to say 'well done', 'you were working very well'. And when we are in the port, everyone must go out if it is possible, all of us need to have a break one day, because men can break down physically.

The vessel is a mechanism. We always have contact with the engine department. The crew always appreciates your care and awareness and always knows that it is mutual, if you give care you will always yield the result. And they think that they do it for me, or for the Captain. Then, for whom am I doing this? I do it first of all for myself, and I award myself by saying to myself 'bravo, Alexander'.

Everyone on the vessel has his concrete task. My task is to plan and schedule the work and then supervise it. I want to be a good leader. But I do not know yet what kind of leader I can be. Maybe two Chief engineers with the same background can complete the work but one will do it with less effort and energy than the other one.

People are always striving after educated and intelligent persons and they try to copy their manners. And if you have power and authority by position, you must use it in the work in case, and not take advantage of your power by putting pressure on the people.

Your subordinates look at you but how do I influence them? If they see that you are educated and you have the knowledge, they say: 'I will ask the Chief, definitely he knows' and even after work and the questions related to their personal life.

We are demanding and trying to create beauty in our surroundings. If people cannot be changed, you need to remind them every time and finally you give order, because

you need to keep the discipline. Each crew member has a different cabin. One creates a comfortable cabin and the other's cabin is scattered. And in this case the advice is simple: Mr... tomorrow morning everything must be in order.

In my responsibilities is also the control of the kitchen. The chief Stuart and cabin boys are not professional waiters. But seamen demand and they know how the table must be served. Maybe we do not have all kind of knives (special for the fish and the meat) as in good restaurants but everything must be clean. If seamen see a dirty fork on the table it can create anger and blow up emotions.

This will contradict the marine traditions. In the restaurant the table must be served by the Stuart. This is not a Russian culture this is a marine culture.

It is always easier to regulate when you have a levers of regulations. It means that the crew member must know that if he does not fulfil the instruction, he will not just make me sad but he will be punished accordingly. If he does not understand then there should be levers of regulation. Because if I am trying explain to him and he does not understand then why must I spend my energy without reason. He is not the only one - I also have other seamen. It is impossible to regulate the situation on an emotional level. As we cannot pump out the oil products to the sea. And this is not just request. There are rules and regulations. And we will have a problem. I have levers and I am a guard. We are independent. But there are the rules of community. And we must learn and carry out these rules. If most of the crew does not smoke then others must respect the non-smokers.

For me the boundary is 6 months of contract period. After 6 months I become more nervous and I can tense the situation, when earlier I did not pay attention closely.

I have worked with different nationalities and I had no problems apart from the minor details. And there are different types of Captains, educated and non-educated ones. But I cannot say that I like to work with one captain or another. This is not a lady that I like or not. I was taught when I was a cadet that the Captain on the ship is a king and God, he has all responsibilities. And when I say to the seaman: 'You know, my friend, I cannot communicate with you, let's go to the Captain'. This must be a shock for him, because the Captain is the last resort. Yes the Captain is a directing and thrusting power, and first of all he organises the work of the Chief Officer and the Chief engineer.

Let's return to the aesthetic. If the Captain on the bridge looks well and is well spoken then people strive after him. And we must try not to damage this image with our look. If the Captain knows that he has support from the chief officer and the chief engineer; when he has some difficulties with the language, he knows that they will help him and will not leave him alone and his crew will support him.

There must be trust and fairness. Sometimes crew members think that their boss was not fair with them. But there are also other opinions. We have meetings. I do not remember if we were discussing aesthetic but sometimes if some of the crew member was harsh with others, we discuss his behaviour. And we do not wait for special meetings, we discuss it immediately.

We need pay attention and see the beauty in our surroundings. It is necessary for us. Very often we become more sentimental than we are usually on shore. Now many of us are fascinated with making a video film. One started and the others got carried away. They bought cameras and tape from each other and did editing. And when a crewmember said: 'What are you taping 10 min. the sea, the pitching and rolling from the waves.' They made jokes and answered: 'I want my wife to know how difficult it is for me. And she will love me more.' We are rude and sentimental seamen who can also abuse each other. If politeness is not false (it is natural) then it is accepted and is pleasing. But when I say 'please' it means order not request. When you are in the higher position you must firm.

The first days on the vessel are always difficult. I am going to the vessel tomorrow and I already feel nostalgia for my family (during the interview Alexander received the message on his mobile from his wife and he was trying to hide his tears).

When you stay 8 months on the vessel and you invest so much energy and feelings working under stress, you get close to her (the vessel). Yes, we become sentimental. Many of us may feel shy and they try to hide their sentimentality.

At sea we can observe a wonderful sunset. I can call my friend (after working hours) and say: come up to the deck to see a beautiful sunset. Or sometimes by loudspeaker you can say: on the star-board side you can see a fantastic rainbow.

In my last contract we saw whales with their babies come so close to the vessel. They were playing with the vessel and blew fountains. After lunch we usually have work on the deck with chipping hammer and they make a lot of noise. And we stopped work in order not to scare them and to observe and tape this on the video. It does not happen often that whales come so close.

These feelings are very delicate ... It is very difficult task.

### *Interview with Captain Vladimir Kourash*

3.05.2005

Vladimir Kourash is a Captain with 45 years of experience at sea. He has been working in Merchant Marine and Navy since 1959.

The aesthetic and psychological atmosphere on the vessel depends on human characteristics of the Captain, on his professionalism. There are factors which are significant. Some captains say 'I did it, I completed the contract, I have achieved it successfully' and the others turn to the whole crew and say 'we did', 'these are our achievements and these are our failures'. This means that the crew is a family. It is the same as in the family where the father and son can live as friends. The border is invisible but one can feel the difference. When the crew is united then the success is achieved very well. There are always 4-5 men in the crew who play the main role. These are the leaders: the leader on the deck, leader on the bridge and leader in the engine room. If these leaders are highly qualified and have a positive and good character, then on the vessel everything goes very well. Victor Vasilievitch (the

crew manager of the company) knows this very well and he selects people properly. There can be exceptions.

First of all the whole atmosphere on the vessel depends on how united, honest, ethical, and human the captain and the chief engineer are. If they are not united then two departments will be created and they will start to compete: 'who', 'how' and 'whose' department and this is very dangerous. People are divided into two departments. One says it is your department and the others say it is yours. In these situations one of them (captain or chief engineer) must leave the vessel. This is the first and the essential part.

Of course, on the vessel there are details to which the Captain must pay closed attention. For example, in the morning the chief officer comes to the bridge to keep watch. He looks tired and in a bad mood. Some captains will not pay attention to this, others will joke about it, will talk to him, by trying to lift the spirit. If the officer is satisfied and looks happy the captain can be sure of his performance during his watch.

What I think of many years' at sea, sometimes wrong people can land a job on the vessel, who are trouble makers, or hell raisers, as I say. They are always unsatisfied. They are equally unsatisfied with their families. In my practice I met one officer. For breakfast we had seven different meals but he said that there was nothing to eat, because he was in a bad mood. The others can think that maybe something is wrong if the officer said so. It is very difficult to work at sea with this kind of persons. Finally you are forced to ask for their replacement. There is no place for these people on the ship; we have no time to change their habits and their character.

If at first glance the captain does not like some of the seamen he has no moral right to show this. He must try with his presence to lift the spirits, to make seamen feel better. If the captain does not love people, his crew he must leave this profession. The work of the captain is multisided. At the same time the captain must be a teacher, must know very well marine law, must be a very good navigator and must be able to communicate with people in the port and everywhere.

Honestly, I remember from my seamen's life the beginning of my career. That time the climate was better. Now it is very difficult. The weather conditions have changed and marine work has become very hard. In the 60<sup>th</sup> we had stormy weather ones or twice in a six month period. Now every month we have stormy weather. We need to take it into consideration that people get tired and nervous during heavy weather. That's why it is important to have a warm atmosphere on the vessel, to keep balanced and warm relationship between people. Shouting and noise does not help. People must live in a peaceful family.

The story. The vessel was planning to moor and suddenly our rotation and the port were changed and we were given new command 'roadstead for twenty days'. Before we were expecting supplies. But the roadstead period had not been taken into account for we would receive supplies only after 20 days. We had a shortage of drinking water and food. The whole crew was patient and only one man was noisy.

Maybe I was lucky in my marine life but I always had a good crew.

In 1991 we had a first joint sailing on the biggest sailing boat with 400 Russian and American cadets. I have prepared the videotape, which may be interesting.

Next year I am thinking of being based on the shore. At my age and after so many years at sea I feel that now is the time to offer my experience and knowledge to the young captains on the shore.

Usually the young officers, when they become captains, start to look at the people from the top. A Captain should never see his crew from above. He must show that he can do all kind of work as well as his subordinate does. When the work is done he must be capable to control it professionally.

But there can be psychological incompatibility. One psychologist in Russia selected a scientific team by psychological compatibility and they reached the result that this team was working together 24 hours without break. Selecting people through this method gives positive result on productivity.

I will tell you one story. We were returning from a long contract, where we had stayed together for 12 months and one week. We were flying, four of us, through Frankfurt to Odessa. We were waiting for our flight. At the airport we met one man who was very drunken and was looking slovenly. We paid attention to him and I said to my people to be careful with their belongings. When we passed passport control we heard noise and shouts. That was a group of seamen. Later, on board we met one drunken seaman and other two were following him on the board the airplane. The hostess asked them to leave because they were very heavily drunken. Then I approached the hostess and asked her to leave them on board under our responsibility by trying to give them excuses that they are seamen; probably they had been at sea for a long time. One of them (this was their chief engineer) starts shouting: 'give us our captain'. I asked the hostess where the captain was and suggested taking him on board but she told me to look into the illuminator and said that it was too late. I saw that the police was taking the drunken man, the slovenly man we had met before. Later on when the seamen sobered up they told us: 'you are probably a businessmen and you do not know what it means to sail for eleven months'.

We answered that we had been sailing for more than twelve months and they could not believe us. It all depends on how the crew has been selected and on human and professional qualities of the seaman.

I was working with different nationalities: with Maldivian and Indian crew, with Pilipino. They are very sensitive and touchy. You must be very careful with them. They react like children, you cannot tell them something on higher tones. Our crews are more restrained.

I have a method in order do not explode: I take a deep breath three times and smile and sometimes people are confused about what is going on.

Once we were headed for Thessalonica. I gave the command 'radar five degrees'. When I saw that the helmsman was keeping fifteen degrees, I asked him: 'I gave command five degrees left' and he answered that chief officer told him to keep fifteen degrees. Then I told the chief officer if he gave this command then to

complete the turn and see if you will stay in the course. The situation was not dangerous and I left the turn on his responsibility. When the vessel turned off course the chief officer apologised. But sometimes the situation demands tough command and later you can be more relaxed.

Many companies recognize that the second most important person on the vessel is a cook. For seamen the food is a very important factor. Cook must be qualified and professional. The mood of a seaman depends on the mood of the captain and the cook. Usually people ask whether captain or cook has woken up in a good mood.

I remember my uncle's advice, he said: 'when you become commander do not be very sweet or very bitter. Because if you are very sweet people will swallow you and if you are very bitter they will spit you out'.

If the captain reaches the level where his people can understand him from one glance it is the result of good communication. The captain must communicate with people everywhere: in the working place and after working hours. The highest achievement for the captain is to create positive atmosphere on the vessel.

I believe that people's feeling for each other lie on thin lines. And if this communication happens on the positive line (aura)...For example you are visiting one family and you want to leave as soon as possible because you don't feel comfortable there. Or sometimes you receive the vessel from previous captain and everything is going well. But sometimes after the delivery of the vessel for some period of time you feel in the cabin heavy atmosphere.

If the spirit of placidity and good humour is hovering over the vessel and whole crew is happy, as we say God helps us. People must smile at each other more often. In this company I was working with Georgian chief engineer and unfortunately he left the company. It was not his fault. This man created such a beautiful atmosphere that all crew on the vessel was very happy. In those conditions productivity was much higher. I think that this factor is very important.

For example you give work to your subordinate. It is different if you just give an order and he will do it without giving his full potential, without heart because he is not happy. Under pressure he will not do this work well. But if he knows that his work will be appreciated, he will do this work with enthusiasm and he will be happy. You do not even need to control his work; he will do it very well. It is very important to care about people, ask them if they are in good mood. Every seaman must feel that his work is valued and significant for the crew and he contributes in his part to the whole result. Everyone must feel like that with his work that he is valuable and he is part of a successful team. If this can be achieved then we have a good relationship between people. People must be occupied with good and valuable work. The good food, good relaxation and good discussions also influence and play a role in how people feel. It is also important what they are watching at lunchtime and after dinner. I suggest them to listen nice music, and watch beautiful films. Maybe it is invisible in the beginning but people's mood changes. People are influenced by what they are watching and hearing. If they watch movies with killing and blood, it creates aggressive emotions. Many things play a role on the vessel. Discussions with people are a very important factor.

Once, the chief officer came to me and said: I demand to disembark a crewmember. I asked, what had happened. The problem was that he gave a command to the seaman but not in the proper way but in a way that humiliates the seaman's personality. The seaman reflects on it. He did not speak to chief officer with respect to his position, as the chief officer said. He was demanding respect because he was a commander. He asked me to give him the line to report to the office about seaman's behaviour. I said: 'I will give you the line but I will investigate what happened and I will give my opinion'. Later, when the chief officer calmed down I explained to him that he had no right as a commander to shout at the people and humiliate them. We should never humiliate people. It is very important on the vessel. We have no right even to judge them. We can judge his actions. For example, the seaman broke the rule. We (command team) called him and discussed why he had behaved in that way, what the reason was. We tried to find out the core of the problem. Even if the seaman was drinking and he deserves punishment by disembarking him we do it without humiliating his personality and without shouting and noise. I explained to him that I respected him as a man but he had breached the contract, the rule of the company. If I forgive him more seamen will drink alcohol at the next port.

When we had a "dry rule" I inserted my method. I told the crew that after three notices of drinking alcohol the seaman would leave the vessel. I will not give bad recommendation but he will depart this vessel. And the first transgressor was a chief navigator who was excellent in his work. He had three notices for drinking alcohol and the crew saw it. The third time I told him that he was leaving the vessel and would not come back. He was crying. And I was very sorry to make this decision but I told him that I respect him as a professional and we were friends, he was my right hand. If I forgave him it would be bad example for others and there would not be discipline on the vessel. All the crew held their breath and waited to see what would happen. Everyone liked this seaman as a person and knew that I respected him too. But I was responsible for the rest of the crew. At the next port the navigator left the vessel. People understood that it was not just words. And after that the behaviour of the crew changed. The drinking-bouts stopped.

Different companies have different ways of dealing with drinking-bout. We are Russians and we are not used to following rules.

I was a Captain of the training boat in 1991 in Texas, USA. We were sailing one month with American cadets. We organised a party and we invited American seamen on our boat. I sent an official letter to the American command team to visit us the following day. On the first day our visitors were the vice-president of the university, the training captain and other lower rank officers but the Captain of the American boat was absent. They told us that he was sick and could not be present. The next day we planned to discuss our training programme at 11 am. I invited them again on our boat because our boat was newer and more comfortable. That day I met the captain of the American boat. He was a very nice man and we became friends later. When I asked him what he would like to drink: coffee or tea because it was 11am. Then the captain said: 'I will tell you the truth. I was not sick yesterday. I have never met Russian captain before that's why I first sent secret agent to see how the situation is and they told me that you have a very good brandy. Let's drink brandy'. I understood that he likes to drink alcohol. But he said that on their vessel there was a 'dry rule'. It was prohibited to bring on the vessel alcohol, even beer.

Later on when we finished our discussion about our future training cooperation I prepared one bag with different drinks: vodka, brandy, and other alcoholic drinks and I wanted to give him this present. He was surprised and said: 'but I told you that we have a regulation – 'no alcoholic drinks on the vessel'. I told him: 'But you are a captain'. He looked at me and said: 'I am the first who must follow the rules and regulations'. These are very important issues of ethics and aesthetic that the captain first must follow. I apologised that we (Russians) get accustomed to this: 'when you are on the top you can breach the rules'. In the Soviet Union this became a habit. This is the mentality of Russian people.

We were sailing to Australia and my crew consisted of very hard working seamen. We had many tasks to complete on this journey. We had vodka on board but for the crewmembers it was prohibited to drink. One day after working hard the crewmember came to me and said that he had completed his job successfully. I told him that I will mention his good work and he will be paid for the over time job. But he was not leaving and he said: 'But I have done my job and it is unusual not to give me a bottle of vodka'. It was difficult for me to refuse his request but I said that it is a rule and you must follow it. Yes, the maintenance of order is very important on the vessel. People must relax in a different way. When we had a priest in the Russian Marine people did not drink alcohol. People must learn other methods of relaxation. On the training courses seamen must learn the way to relax.

On one of the vessels I had a cook who came to me and said that he could not sleep at night. He was a professional, he cooked very well but he could not smile at people. Because he could not sleep for a weeks he was nervous. I showed him the way of meditation and it helped him. He could sleep at nights and he changed his relationship with the seamen.

Often when I am on shore people from my previous crew call me at home and say that they just want to communicate with me.

On the vessel all attempts must be directed at making people feel well and work with enthusiasm and keep discipline. On the vessel we must lead people and not urge forward.

I met in our company young officers whose natural kindness and positiveness had vanished. If a son does not love his mother and his wife isolates him from his family, from his parents, he will not be happy. People must understand this. On the vessel I discuss with my crew, I tell them that there is a very deep meaning to this concept. Children must not hurt the feelings of their parents especially of the mother because the soul of the child was chosen to be implanted in the body of a particular woman – the mother. He will not be happy if he goes against his soul. In order to be happy... man lives in three dimensions: the spiritual – the soul – physical body. The body wants to have basic goods. The soul is a representative and if the soul is located closer to the spirit then the man is happy. People must not get caught in mundane goods, as people say 'God gave it and God took it'. And if the man thinks that he is better than the others he will not be successful either in his career or in his private life. I believe in 'karma' (stern). If the man humiliates other people then later in his life he will be humiliated by the others. The leader must have a philosophical understanding of life.

Nowadays 50% of the seamen do not believe on God. And 30% of them do not have belief in anything. I have met this kind of seamen. When in discussion with the young seamen you become closed to these concepts they say: 'what are you talking about? I want to earn more money, I am not interested in anything else. There are only 40% of the crew that you can rely on them, for the others you must care about their safety. People always respect this care.

The vessel is a female ('she'). You cannot know her without loving her. Our family must love this vessel too. I was on the training vessel. My summerhouse has a view to the sea and we can see how the vessels depart from the port. I was on vacation and we were at our summerhouse with my family. I saw that my wife was looking at sea and she was crying. I asked her why she was crying. She answered with groan: 'our vessel has left'. Yes, all our family and children love the vessel. Those times we were attached to our vessel. It was our second home. Our families visited us on the vessel and celebrated holidays all together.

Now the relationship in some way has changed. People see the vessel only as a place where they earn money and this is a terrible feeling. It must be very hard. I am sure that these people must be very unhappy.

When people are happy they perform much better. In my opinion habits of the people play very important role in their private and working life. There are good and bad habits. For example there is healthy and unhealthy nourishment. And also the smoking habit on the vessel is very bad. I do not permit the seamen to smoke in cabins I tell them that when I make inspection of the cabins I will smell it. I tell them that it is not safe to smoke on the vessel and also is very dangerous for their health. And, of course, there are dissatisfactions. But later on they thanks me and say that it is so pleasing to sleep in the non-smoking cabin. And this is very simple. It is only matter of habit.

If we cultivate good habits by changing the bad ones it also has aesthetic value. By trying to improve something for the better people do not even understand how this change happened. By explaining to them that some habits are not good for their health on my last contract three seamen quit smoking. Aesthetic is also to respect others.

The captain must observe and see his people's habits and if it is possible to change or to improve them for the better. Some seamen change their habits during contract. It is also aesthetic knowledge, which can be learned.

People ask me why at my age I am still working at sea. I tell them that I cannot live the shore life because people here have lost kindness and humanity. I cannot see what is going on here. I will tell you the story what happened to me last Christmas. I returned from the vessel on Great Friday and went to the market to buy a Christmas tree. On my way home I saw one child about nine or ten years old who grasped from the fence and called for help, because three men looking like bodyguards were beating him. I approached them and asked them to leave the child. They told me that he had stolen food from McDonalds and this was not the first time. The child was crying and I felt sorry for him. I said: 'I will pay you, how much do you want, just let him go'. They let him go. The child turned around the corner. I followed him

and I saw that on the corner the group of adults were waiting for him and I could hardly recognise that child with the scared look on his face. It was a different person, it was not child any more; and he had become the same as the others in his environment.

If the skeleton of society behaves like bandits the people will behave accordingly. But if the humanity and feelings work well together it will bring harmony to work. The captain must be a psychologist. It is his professionalism. He leads people and he must know men.

In the past people went at sea by vocation. It was a romantic profession. Of course he loved his profession and he was trying to be professional. But now if you ask the young cadets or crewmembers: 'Do you like your profession?' The answer: 'No'- And why did you come here? – Where else can I earn money? And the same answer you can receive from some of the officers and crewmembers.

It is very hard to work with people who do not love their work. I believe that it is possible to inculcate in people love for the vessel. And when there is a love for the vessel then we have good relations on the vessel. How can we inculcate love in people? First of all everyone must understand that the vessel is our home. If this feeling is inculcated in the seamen then from the first step to the vessel's ladder he cares about the vessel, tries to keep it clean and make it beautiful. On the other hand he feels care and warmth on the vessel, and good food makes him feel happy. And he starts to love the vessel. It is not a secret that if the food is good and well organised on the vessel it can be even better than in many families of the seamen. If the cook is good and the food is good this is important factor for inculcating love in seamen. And when he returns home he says to his wife: 'our cook on the vessel cooked so well. He was so nice to us: he meets us with his white suit; he smiles at us, he always talks to us, and always feeds us with tasty food. He was like a mother for us'. (I know this from the words of the seamen).

And this is true. The vessel is our wet-nurse.

### *Interview with Captain Vladimir Shikin*

25.08.2005

I started my marine career 20 years ago and it definitely had a great impact on my life. Nowadays, however, there is less romanticism and more routine. This is because every year we are burdened with new rules and regulations while the previous ones aren't eliminated. Every year the fleet is renewed but the crew size decreases.

Concerning human relationships, we are all in the same boat. Whether we like it or not, we all depend on each other and we need to help each other in difficult situations. Of course, there is also there is also the daily routine, when there are disagreements between the bridge and the engine department. But in general in the 6 years that I've been in this company, I have never had a situation where the engine

department refused to help me when I needed it. For example, although the engine crew has specific tasks, if I need some men to help clean the holds, they never refuse. This is true of the officers and petty officers as well. In general, we never have any major friction.

How well you learn a person's ability to work at sea depends on the contract-its destination and duration. Within 8-9 months you can definitely see if a new seaman is interested in his work and does it with pleasure. While when someone doesn't like his work, he starts complaining before you even give him instructions. So, you form an opinion about a person and you take it into consideration.

My previous trip was very difficult. We transported coal which left a lot of residue to Brazil, where we discharged and immediately loaded crude oil to Argentina where again we received another load. The charterers didn't care about what we were carrying before or how hard it was to clean it thoroughly. There are some loads that have very strict demands and grain is one of them. After the coal and crude oil, we had to clean the hold thoroughly and paint it for the new load. There was a time limit, it had to be done quickly, and it was raining, which made our work very difficult. All the crew, without exceptions, helped out. It's the charterer's job to hire additional people for cleaning and loading but in order to avoid extra costs, it is cheaper and easier for them to lay all the workload on the crew. The work is very hard because despite the great size of the vessel-75-77,000 tons- and the continuous loading and discharging, the passes are short, the number of people is small and time is limited. As a result, the crew is very tired and what alleviates this a little is letting them go to shore although this does not happen often and not everyone can go off board-only the engineers and the second, third and fourth officers.

Crews are different and attitudes to work are different. How can a captain influence people to perform better? This is why I like very much working with Russian crews. Because they have the mentality of 'I have to do this; it must be done.' I have worked with Filippino, Hindu and black crews who do not have this mentality. However, if a Russian promises to do the work after a small rest, he will do it, and not just because he trusts the chief officer, but because he realizes the importance of this work; they know that if the ship is delayed, it will affect all of us. Every member of the crew realizes their individual responsibility.

Now, about the relationship between crew members and captain with crew members. We work as a team. If the team works well, then we have good performance. Seamen feel they have responsibilities 24 hours a day in contrast to office workers on land, who at the end of their working day can go to the theatre, cinema, a football game. A seaman has nowhere to go. At any moment he may be faced with an extraordinary situation. The siren might go off at any time and you may need to mobilize people. But by working and living as a team, seamen learn from the marine academy and are tested from their first voyage.

Seamen have a feeling of responsibility towards others and can't be indifferent to others' emotions. There are, of course, moments of small clashes or when someone's feelings are hurt, but on the whole people who work on the same vessel care about each other. About 80% of the men who work for this company are good. In the beginning, I had some difficulty getting to know the people, but after my

second and third contract, I learnt people and they learnt me. Perhaps when people feel human sympathy, they work better-this is the power of a captain, being able to influence people. Being able to influence people also depends on their ethics and culture. There are times when you need to try to ignore bad behaviour, if it is not very serious. However, if discussion is not effective because the person doesn't or can't change, then you need to take radical action. We rarely get to such a point. For example, a seaman might be doing repair work on the deck without the proper safety gear. This doesn't make sense to me because when I tell them, I do it for the own good and not mine. If they have an accident and become paralyzed, they won't be able to take care of their families. So in such cases I have to reprimand them.

Human relations must always be two-sided. People want to get off at a port, to go for a walk and to relax. The crew manager and I try to offer this to them to compensate them for the good work they have done. People know and believe that if they complete the work and the contract effectively, it will also have a positive effect on them- their reputation, future work and promotion. They know that their effort will be appreciated and will not go unnoticed so they will be pleased. It is important for them to work willingly and do their best. And as far as human relationships are concerned, they try to be humane and understanding with their colleagues. The company policy is very good-the aim is to work as a team and for the crew to be professional and reliable. If someone was not able to become party of the team, it means there was a problem with his personality. There are cases of men who always find fault with everything. Of course, not everyone can be good at his work, moral, professional, ethical, to have culture or be good at communication. One will be better than another. You see who is better or worse and you select the best. People definitely appreciate good behavior, good relationship or treatment and this is an incentive for them to improve and become more productive.

I have to create this atmosphere because the company demands this from me. But no one asks me how I feel, if I understand this or whether I consider it rational or not. Of course, when you believe in the effectiveness of something, this gives a burst of positive energy. However, you need to look at each case separately. There are some demands which you understand and find useful, and this gives you satisfaction. But there are things you don't see the purpose of-they have no rationality and no effect. Because situations and people and approaches vary, you can't have a uniform behaviour for all situations. For example, there is a casualty report which not many captains fill in and which you send to the company and it circulates to other ships so they can be informed and avoid the same mistakes. This form does not mention the vessel's name and is not critical. An example was that the ship was rocking due to bad weather and a seaman was probably not tied while doing work and broke his hand. This kind of collecting of experience can positively influence the safety of the crew in the future. We learn from others' mistakes so we can avoid them and I believe this a rational action.

Something I disagree with is the ISS code. They make us apply this code although we have no knowledge or training on this. So it is a waste of time. There are other codes which are ridiculous, for example a code against terrorism or another on how to detect drugs. For such codes, you need professional authorities. How can ensure the safety of the ship with so many check lists and security locks? This useless paperwork and additional inspections are a waste of time and cause delays. An

unprofessional crew cannot deal with such situations. For example, we have to hang lights around the ship and have water hoses and they expect us to face terrorists with these! With a shovel and a mop, you can't confront a terrorist. All this you need to record in the security journal and you need to have security watches around the ship. And we cannot do anything but follow these rules and waste our precious time on all this paperwork. This is how things are. If we have an order to do something, we do it. The situations where it is helpful are few. For example, American rules say that twice every day you need to gather the crew and check that no one is missing. I think that even if you checked 5 times a day, if a seaman wanted to leave the ship, he will do it. The security officer is always the captain and he responsible for everything. These codes and rules come so quickly that you have no time to understand and apply them; if you haven't had special training, it's impossible to know how to diffuse an explosive device, for example-you need to be an explosives expert, I am a navigator. In effect, it does not change the safety of the ship. Despite the large amount of paperwork, the level of safety is not increased. On the contrary, it has a negative effect on our work because we waste our time and our attention on it. I believe that my job is mainly navigation-it is what I was taught to do and what I chose and love to do; it is not what they are forcing me to do. It's not my fault that conditions in the world have changed; I'm not a professional in what they're asking me to do. It's the same as telling a pilot to do something other than fly a plane-there is security personnel at airports who do that. So why should I be obliged to this because of a lack of professionals. Everyone has their own job to do.

Captains are taught to be navigators. The new generation of captains can't do anything without computers. The computer is something which limits your ability to think. Today, everything is automated and people don't have elementary calculating skills; for any minor thing they need to use the computer. They are so dependent on computers that they can't even communicate without them. Of course, in critical situations, it's the person who makes the decision, not the computer; this is why I tell them to do the calculations by hand and then verify the answer on the computer. But they are stuck on the computer.

Automation is everywhere. Radars today can do everything and some may even recommend the shortest route. Of course, doing this manually requires more time. In my day, we had to solve a case with 5 ships in 5 minutes-to design the route, the speed and course of each ship. We had to calculate the real speed and not the relative speed. This wasn't difficult for us then because we only needed logic and orientation-what a true navigator must have. Nowadays, the radar is everything.

Of course, there are both positive and negative sides to automation. Young officers play on the computer instead of communicating with each other-most of them may not even know how to communicate. The computer has no feelings or compassion. I can't interfere with their choices-if they prefer to sit in front of the computer, I can't forbid this. There are groups of seamen who gather and play computer games together-this is their hobby. We have few pleasures on a ship-we can play table tennis, read books-we don't have many choices, so if they have found a common interest in computers, you let them do that.

-Metaphors carry emotions, feelings, culture, experiences.

But they must be relevant. For example, 'we are all under the same harness'.

People's feelings on the ship must be positive and this is why the captain's example always influences people. The style of command also plays an important role. They can sense when the captain is more, or less emotional or in a good or bad mood. If during the whole 8-9 months, he yells and shouts at people, then this is his style. But if he yells only on occasion, the crew understands that even the captain might be in a bad mood once in a while in the 8-9 months. People can also understand the feelings of the captain through intonation. Most times they are positive feelings but they can also be negative at times.

I remember once when we had to make some arrangements at 4-5 in the morning. The men were still sleepy and we had various delays-one man forgot something, we were waiting for the tug boat...So the process of preparation was delayed. When something is related to the safety of the crew, it's the responsibility of the captain. But when the situation is vital for their safety, it's important that all the men feel responsible for other members. As far as the officers are concerned, they know when something must be done in order to protect human lives so I don't have to tell them what to do. As far as crew members are concerned, this feeling is not cultivated or developed. There are many examples where we discuss and analyse the reason why this happens and you must teach them to use the safety equipment. For example, the cook and the steward don't know how to drop the lifeboats. In such cases, you hope that the professionals will know how to do it and they need to know this not only for the inspections or for me; they need it to save their lives if they have to. All this must be cultivated in them during the voyage. This realization must be cultivated in them as a feeling of responsibility. If you use your power to force them to do it, it gives them the impression that you don't care but it's something you want to impose on them. Action is the best example.

People know that I am punctual and I work until the work is finished. Once in a while we watch all together safety movies. There are always 1-2 people who will be late. If it happens once, it's OK but if it's consistent, it's not right for 15 people to wait for one person, not even for 5 minutes.

There is no room for error at sea. It is human factor and not machinery that is responsible for mistakes. Our target is to foresee and pre-act so we can avoid accidents and casualties. I always tell my assistants not to hesitate to wake me if they have doubts about their navigation. They mustn't inform me when it's too late so that I can have time to solve the problem. If you take control of the situation early enough, you don't let the situation become irreversible-you can correct the course of the ship. In extraordinary situations, it's sometimes very difficult to make fast decisions.

People feel that I care about them and am interested in their professional development. The most important thing is that they see that with my actions I feel responsible for them. This raises their morale and causes a positive reaction from them. The danger and risk of our job is characteristic so the men want to feel safe with their captain. The men see that everything I do is done with love for my work. Our relationship depends on inter-related feelings that have developed. If you do something without energy and with your head down, then the result can never be effective. You need to do everything with love. If your only motivation is money,

without love for people, then it won't work. This love comes from inside, it can't be imposed. This love for the job is a gift. The key to everything is love of people. It mustn't be a demonstration of your position. People see and feel a captain's love. People need to be led with love. When a man has a relationship of love with his work, he enjoys it and has a passion for it. My friends often ask why I don't work on a tanker, where there is more money; but I love my ship and don't want to do that. There is a saying: "I don't like going into another man's sled".

I believe that my passion for my work makes my work more effective. It's this passion that is the engine for my love of my work. Everything is inter-related. This is harmony.

### *Interview with Chief Engineer Sergey Novitsky*

26.08.2005

I have been working in Merchant Marine since 1972 (already 34 years). When I was starting, those years we had no time to think about aesthetic or about beauty. We were working in our own Soviet country where everything was planned and you could not think about anything. It was aesthetically wrong to be noted for your witness. It was politically wrong to think in a different way and if anyone stood out for his originality, very soon he was isolated.

Today, when I have learnt to work with people and become more experienced, I begin to understand that it is beauty which is very important in our work and in our life in general, because it helps us to organise. If people do not clean their working place, tomorrow they will not do their work correctly. Because lack of discipline and negligence in the work becomes visible from these details. I demand cleanliness at home and at work. Since I became a Chief in the engine room I teach my people and explain to them that this is not just beauty or because I like everything to be in place, it becomes your habit to be disciplined and to be accurate in organising your work. Maybe I use technical terms but I always urge people to think about these issues. If you were working with one instrument you must clean it and put it accurately in its place in order not to damage it. This is also aesthetic of our work. When you are dancing with a woman you must support her with elegance. Here, at the work we must treat our instruments like a woman; being gentle with a piece of iron will give/provide better results, machines will work better. Being accurate in details today can become a key for success tomorrow. All these concern the aesthetic at workplace, as you call 'aesthetic'. I call it with its technical term: exactness (neatness), tidiness. At each stage of work everything must be done correctly in order to achieve good results.

When I was younger I worked with the second engineer (I was a 3<sup>rd</sup> engineer). In the engine room he differed from others; his working suit was always clean and ironed. Our work is very heavy and dirty. But every day after work he washed his suit and he was always clean. Now our company pays attention to tidiness and cleanliness. The officers must always be dressed in white suits. It is very difficult in the engine room to keep your white suit clean. It makes you more responsible and unintentionally you try to work beautifully.

You always try to do your work beautifully. I like it very much. We have a people who work fast and people who work slower but they do their work nicely. We always admire things which are beautiful. This is also in work. I always say: 'when you are working with machine, take care of it and you will like it when it is repaired and clean, you will respect it more.'

- Sergey, you are talking about the engine as if it were animate.

Of course, it is animate. When I come to the engine room I pat on her (main engine) shoulder and say: 'Hello my mammy.' The engine is our fellow. From now on we must live in harmony. And when I leave the vessel I always go to the main engine to say: 'Goodbye my dear and thank you for everything. I am leaving for holidays.' She always supports me. The engine is animate for us. She takes so much energy from me but also gives me so much'.

When engine does not work and you fix and clean it and it works again you feel like you gain something, it is rewarding. You made every effort to bring it (the main engine) to life. After that you have more respect for yourself.

Early in the morning I make a round of the engine room and I know everything that was done, what is missing and what we need to do first. When my staff comes down for work I tell them their mistakes from the previous day and what they need to do in order to avoid them, by trying to explain them that if you do not fix the problem it will grow as a snowball, do not waste the time.

- Sergey, you link the beauty with a feeling of responsibility.

I have the same feeling about responsibility and the beauty. For me responsibility and beauty is the same thing. In the beginning, maybe when I was younger the feeling of responsibility was stronger because I was trying to prove that I can do my work well in order to be promoted. But when you are expecting people's recognition you try to do your work beautifully. All this is interrelated. The more you understand, the more you realise that you must do everything nicely.

This is a Russian stereotype from the past. We were educated in the spirit of sacrificing our life for our job. Today the word 'you must' sounds different; its meaning has become wider. I have a different feeling, that I must do this work thinking not only of myself but also of others. I have been already working in this company for six contracts and my thoughts are wider. Because I know that if today I do my work well and beautifully this will bring the company stability. Today our salaries are increasing and works conditions are better. All these are interrelated. To my mind, there is no narrow thinking only about myself. I feel responsible for all my team, even for all the ship (crew). From the past we had a division of the vessel's crew into two departments but now it is invisible. I always teach my people that it is not right to divide a crew into bridge and engine departments. Although I am responsible for the engine department, all work and function of my department depends on the bridge and vice versa. The vessel cannot be engine and bridge departments; it is a whole, embodied organism. If in the morning I make rounds of the engine room, in the afternoon I am on the bridge.

- Sergey, there is an expression of seamen that the engine is the heart of the ship.

Yes, but a heart cannot work without a brain. Everything on the vessel is interrelated. Today our work is connected to the work of the Captains. Honestly, I am sorry about Captains. According to the new regulations, their work has changed. They have too much paper work.

I love and I respect my work very much. In my heart, I think that my work is more important and interesting. Of course, I do not tell anybody about this. I manage not only the engine room but also advise the Captain and sometimes I give commands even to the chief officer. Usually I communicate with Captains without any problem. In the beginning I observe them and learn their manners. I can always find the common language with any Captain.

- Do you think that your feelings of beauty (aesthetics) help you to influence people?

Many seamen come to the vessel as very young cadets, 20-21 years old. They are untrained and unpolished in their habits. Now young cadets differ one from another. There is a bigger gap in test, outlook, and education. Most of them know very well computers but they are not good in communication.

When you have an opportunity and experience you organise your work with aesthetics. I can rely on people who put up resistance. The people who agree with everything and have no capacity to resist, I do not trust them. . I always discuss with my crew different stances or opinions on work. The people who do not have their own opinion are dangerous because if we do not discuss the task then he can make mistake without informing others. My task is to foresee mistakes. And how I can foresee if the man has not got his own opinion? How can I understand what he has on his mind? These kinds of people can do only automatic work, which does not require thinking.

In order to increase productivity of our work we must praise people for the good job. There are some commanders who think that they did their work because they must do so. But it is always pleasure for the people to be noticed for the good completion of their work and next time he will think that he is a capable and he will try to do his job better. By praising people you prompt them to development. But if you say that what ever he is doing is wrong then he has this negative feeling, which does not help him to develop. And in this way the feeling of responsibility and love for the work cannot be cultivated. After saying 'well-done' and praising people they want to hear it again. Maybe it sounds strange but it is true in practice.

When I know people and respect them in the working place, I trust them. I know that I can achieve all kinds of work with and it is always pleasure to work with them. And sometimes you know that you are going on a difficult vessel but I go with pleasure. If you do not trust these people and you are not sure of their abilities it is difficult to work with them. Before 'Samos' (the company) I was working with a Philippine crew. My salary was one thousand dollars more than in this company but in six-month contract I lost seventeen kg of my weight. Continuously I was under

stress because the crew had no initiative for the work and I could not have a rest even one day during the six-month period.

I understood that happiness is not in money. You were talking about harmony. In the past I did not use this word 'harmony' in my vocabulary. Really, we need harmony in our surroundings: harmony of conditions and relationship with people. Of course you cannot be in harmony with all people. For example, with Victor Vasilyevitch (crew manager) we are often fighting because he is explosive like me. When something is not fair we react in the same way. Last year we delivered the new building vessel. I was working with a team of good, clever and talented young seamen. I did not need to control them closely. We were working in harmony because the crew was very well selected. Now I will go back again on that vessel. That time I liked so much the work of my third engineer, he did all his work with so much artistry that I took photographs and scanned them on the computer and showed his work to everyone. I told to the crew manager that this engineer is very talented and he has a future. Now he is not so experienced but from his work you could understand that he is very accurate and he does his work with aesthetics. On another vessel I was working with the second engineer who was older than me. He was hard worker but he was not working with his heart, and his relation to the job was not good. Our crew manager is very good in selecting people. He knows them well. All crews that I worked with were good.

Today the ability to teach, to give, to do a favour – is a talent, is a charisma. In the Soviet period we had a very strong educational basis. It was not by luck that Western companies have employed our specialists in 2-3 years. We had very good teachers (mentors). I have contact with them to this today. When I return home I visit them and we always have themes to discuss and stories to remember from the past. I tell them about my job and they feel happy and it pleases me and gives me positive energy. They always want to hear stories about the sea. These stories bring them close to the sea. They were real mentors. I feel their influence already twenty-five years. I started with them as a fourth engineer. I become Chief engineer and they are still with me (in my mind). They imparted their love for the work to me (love for my profession), and maybe the aesthetics of work. Maybe their methods of teaching us were not so modern but they taught us the right things. Theoretical (technical) knowledge is not enough for the completion of work. Now young cadets come to the vessel with a Diploma of fourth engineer. But who will teach them? In the past we had practice before every contract. We went to our mentors; we had a kind of workshop. Now if young seamen are lucky they will meet somebody who wants to teach them. But it is a two-way relationship; only if he wishes to learn and he has an interest in his job can I teach him. And this interest can be provoked with interesting stories and questions.

I love my work very much and respect it. Maybe it is egoistical to say, but my work is the best. Because she (my job) has supported me since childhood and I respect her. I often hear the word 'pathos'. I do not use this word, but my wife tells me that after three month of disembarking period it is time to go back to the sea. She understands that I miss the sea, my work. And I feel that my soul seeks the sea

Of course, when alarms are screaming and the vessel is rolling and pitching you cannot be romantic. But sometimes (rarely) when we are free from work, we go to

the bridge and look at the horizon, at the stars at night. It is pleasant to talk about aesthetic. I think it is something that we forgot but it is our future. Unfortunately, life has become cruel (severe). People put first importance on material goods. They work together but they are aggressive and angry. In my present company the stability and general climate somehow smoothes out this anger. In previous companies I felt this anger from others. Instability, low salaries and old vessels make people feel that nothing can be fixed and changed. People were depressed. This situation of moral pressure, especially for seamen who saw their families suffering and they were unable to help them, made them start to drink alcohol. Fortunately we have passed that period.

The feeling of responsibility is a beautiful feeling. All these issues of culture, discipline and morality, ethics and aesthetics, and beautiful are interrelated. Seamen crews are very close to each other. Each act of the seaman is related to others. If other members of crew snubbed seaman he cannot overcome it easily as he could do it at shore life by meeting his family, or friends. We live together; we eat, sleep and work together and not only for one or two days but months.

In our small community people who are able to act unmorally and unethically cannot stay for a long time, they cannot survive. The other members of crew will try with all possible ways to turn them away or we call the crew manager and inform him that this person creates problems among crew. It is painful when somebody hurts you. And I try to put an end to this from the beginning. For me is very important to keep people united. If there is a crack in relationship we must stop it, as we say technically: to drill the crack in order to stop it in the beginning. We must understand the core of the problem. Sometimes it can be just a misunderstanding. In this case I talk to each person separately and try to explain to him how his actions can affect the morale between members of crew. It is very important to have a positive morale climate on the vessel. If there is some displeasure it will affect everything: our work and beauty of our relationship, our existence as a whole. The moral acts are always beautiful and immoral are always ugly. People must be aesthetes in their soul. External beauty is not real. People who are not beautiful inside are changing. I need one-two weeks to understand if the seaman is a good person. We learn each other very soon because we are together twenty-four hours. But the whole climate on the vessel depends on the Captain. He has all authority; all lines go through him. The moral and aesthetic climate of the vessel depends of the morality and aesthetics of the Captain.

In my present company all Captains are younger than me but they always support me morally. Sometimes my authority is not enough and I am obliged to send the seaman to the Captain. And this is a seaman's last chance to correct his behaviour. Otherwise we decide to turn him away.

These are two important key positions: Captain and Chief engineer. If we cooperate in harmony it is very important for the whole crew. We need to direct people, to set the example of how to work beautifully. Beauty characterises humans. Now we have a problem of aesthetics in our country, in our city. Anarchy and lack of moral responsibility for the cleanliness and beauty of the city characterises our young generation. If we are not aware of aesthetics, beauty and purity then we are more like animals than humans. People are so angry, desperate that they cannot think

about morality and aesthetics. For decades people were not smiling. All their beliefs disappeared, they felt that they lost everything. I was lucky that I was in the Russian Marine and was employed by a western company. So I could support my family morally. Before I was very proud that I was a seaman. Now I am very proud of my profession as an engineer, and this feeling of satisfaction from my work is very important for me.

The vessel is our home and the crew is our family. I have spent half my life on the vessel. And I try to influence people to feel that they are in their home and they must care about it, to make it more beautiful. They must feel as a part of this family, of our small society. We must be sensitive to each other. Sometimes people are very closed in themselves and then we live like strangers in a family. That's why we must try to have harmony in our relationship. In order to achieve harmony of relationship the feeling of responsibility, morality and feeling of beauty are necessary. We need harmony everywhere. At least we must strive for beauty and harmony.

In our country there is no beauty, no harmony. And this is a big problem for people. We cannot sever the link with our mother country. Through our work we go to our home, to our family. As the song says: 'I am going from you to you'. And this harmony, which we reach on the vessel, in our small community we want to bring it to our country and to our family. When I return to my mother land I want to find the same there. But instead of beauty we meet anger and drunken faces. My wife warns me: 'Do not open the door if you do not know who is there'. How can we live without trust? And how we can have harmony if there is no trust between people? I leave my country with hard feelings. My friends say that I have everything and I must be happy. I would share all I have if I could make other people happy. I was happy in the past when we knew that if you had a profession you would always find a job. There was stability in our country and people felt safe. Now we are living with memories of the past and an unknown future. We want to reach harmony, love and beauty in a civilized way, and not through deprivations.

Maybe the ship could be the good model of harmony and beauty in a relationship; and we could transfer this to the offices, to our country and our family. The young cadet who was treated well on the vessel by his colleagues will never behave unethically. He conveys positive energy and love for others because these feelings have been cultivated on the vessel. And these feelings are growing and he looks for beauty and harmony everywhere. And I wish this happy end would be true not only in movies but also in reality. We always have a hope for better conditions of life for people in our country and everywhere.

### *Interview with Captain Sergey Khromikhin*

*13.10.2005*

I have worked in this company for seven contracts: two as a chief officer and 5 contracts as a Captain (on tanker vessels).

I am from central Russia, the Vladimirsk region, where I was born; it is an ancient Russian land. We have no sea, only rivers, big and small. We do not have seamen in

my family, even going back seven generations. My parents are simple workers. But my wife says that maybe I was a seaman in my previous life.

We like to travel with my wife. Greece is a beautiful country but I like my own city. I am a patriot of my region, where my roots are. From the age of 12 I did not expect help from anyone. My family was poor. Children my age had a bicycle and I didn't. But I knew that I would live in better conditions than my parents and even than boys my age. And I knew that in order to live well I must become boss or Captain and not by position but to be real Captain who can lead people.

Twenty-four years old I was a chief officer. I have worked with fourteen different captains. There were young petty tyrants, the old ones that gave all their experience to me, and the others, who left you to learn on your own.

I was a chief officer, the second man on the vessel. We were mooring the vessel. Captain says: 'I am going to my cabin to prepare for leaving home and you will stay on the vessel. So, you do everything, you moor the vessel and you do the loading.' And he left. He trusted me. I was very lucky with my first Captain. He gave me all command of the vessel but he kept me under control. Every evening he called me to the Captain's cabin and told me: 'I will not explain anything to you. In the paper I made a note of everything you need to pay attention to.' He was a very good man. I will remember him all my life. And before, when I had practice after Marine Academy I had very good teachers. I graduated the Baltic Marine Academy in Tallinn. All our teachers were ex-captains and chief officers. In summer we had practice on the vessel as cadets and after that we had to pass a test. Once, in my practice I had a Captain who was a dean of navigation department in the Academy. He gave me the first practical lessons in leading. He would say: 'Look at the captain, his relationship with chief officer, how he behaves with his officers-navigators, with crewmembers, how he talks to mess boys.' Everything was based on examples.

There is no ideal man. You always remember the positive sides of each captain. I learnt some things from one captain, other things from another. But I have learnt also from the stories told about unknown captains.

The most important thing is to be respectful to the people who respect you. It is not enough to be a Captain-leader by position, and professional navigator. This humane side of the captain is very important. As one of my captains told me once: 'Sergey, you say something and people follow you.' And I told him: 'But nobody will follow you'. This captain was very experienced navigator but he could not lead people. Despite being half his age I was leading people. People looked into my eyes, even seamen who were at my father's age. They said: 'The Chief said...and they could not leave that work for later.' I never talk to seamen in the form of command. I say thing with humour and kindly and people like this. I could be very strict in my requirements but again it was in humorous form. The most important thing is your relation; you must relate to the man with respect. To make him feel comfortable to come to you (to his captain) and tell you his problem. And simply communicate with you. There are captains (kind of petty tyrants) who do not permit crewmembers to go upstairs on the bridge. I have worked with this kind of captain.

It is not by position that you are a leader on the vessel. People see how you are developing. I was a third officer only one year. I had a good communication and relationship with people and very fast I was promoted to the chief officer (four years after Marine Academy). I was working with a very good captain; he was trying to promote me to the best and biggest vessel. But I have never been a communist. And when they looked at my documents that I was not a member of the Party and was twenty-four years old only, they sent me to the small vessel on local lines.

I worked with the captains who set off the alarm at 2 o'clock in the morning, just because they had not done this for a long time and because they could not sleep. And this Captain (petty tyrant) did not go to the crew; he sent me.

If people have a problem on the shore-based operation, they go to the boss and he can help them, he can also replace them if it is necessary. When you are in the middle of ocean nobody will send you replacement by helicopter. And if there is no other solution then the crew department always supports you. People have been disembarked from Australia, Argentina, and Canada, despite it being costly for the company.

If a seaman makes call home and intonation of his wife seems different to him, then bad thoughts go through his mind. If I see that a seaman is looking sullen, I always ask the chief officer to find out what happened. Or I call seaman to my cabin and give him the captain's line to call home again and clarify why his wife was sad. After that his face lit up with happiness.

It happened in this company. One seaman was looking gloomy, spending hours in the smoking area and no one asked him why he was looking so unhappy and the next morning they found him hanged. It was his first contract on the vessel. Later on we learnt that he had problems with his wife. Others jumped over board. This is not the only stress that we feel on the vessel. We continuously feel responsibility for everyone. The crew on a tanker vessel can consist of thirty, or twenty-five or twenty-three seamen. And you feel responsible maybe more for their family, for their children and wife than for them personally. There were many accidents where seamen lost their lives or became disabled. If something happens to a seaman, his child and his wife will come and say to me: 'where is my father? We entrusted him to you.'

Seamen behave differently on the vessel than when they are at home. On the vessel they know that there is a Captain as their father who will solve all their problems. But at home they must decide everything on their own.

Usually in the first four months the crew is very happy, everything is going well and without any problem. They understand you from the first glance. As soon as my officers see that I am going upstairs to the bridge, I do not need to tell them anything. The Chief Officer already knows what he must do. He contacts the boatswain and all work goes well. One of my Chief Officers said: 'Our captain is strict but fair.'

On one of the vessels the Chief engineer was severe with his subordinates. Once his subordinate made a mistake, he shouted at him and the seaman (he was very sensitive person) lost consciousness.

When I come to the vessel and I have a new crew, I observe them for one week. Then I organise a meeting with all the crew. I tell them: 'You are professional seamen but you do not have any experience.' Try in two months to increase your professional level otherwise you will return home.' Their previous captains asked them to paint the vessel under the rain, just to keep them busy. He was not interested in what they did and how they work. He was not interested if seamen learnt something new and became more experienced after the contract.

I have also worked with international crews. But independently from culture and nationality it is not so important what Captain says, or Chief Officer, or Chief engineer (your boss) but how he says it. His intonation is very important. I never understood the way of talking with seaman: 'Hey, seaman, come here.' You must know all your crew by name if you expect people's respect. It is even desirable to call them by their father's name. In Russian tradition when we call people, for example, Sergey Nikolaevitch it shows your respect to this person. And independently of his age, and his position, instead of calling: 'Hey, student, come here', as many commanders usually do, to say: 'Sergey Petrovitch, please you must pay more attention to this or...'

Once, before coming to the vessel, the crew manager told me that there are two students-cadets on board, please pay attention to them. I came on board, all the crew was there but I did not see the cadets. I asked officers: 'Where are the cadets?' They said that the previous captain did not permit them to stay on bridge by saying that they have nothing to do there. I was surprised. They had the diploma of navigator and after six months these cadets would be fourth officers. Who would teach them, how would they gain experience? I immediately called the cadets and told them that after dinner at 19.00 - 21.00 they would stay on the bridge. "And if you do not understand something, please, ask officers. If they cannot help you ask the chief officer or do not hesitate come to me, I will always find the time to explain to you whatever you want to know about navigation in practice". I learnt this from my example. I become experienced because I had good teachers who were always ready to help me and to give me their experience.

I always find time to speak with crewmembers on a friendly level when I go around the deck. But if it is necessary I give them notice that shortly they must improve their performance. For example, if bread is not baked well, I say to the cook: 'Try this bread, do you like the taste? Please, next time do not repeat this mistake.' The food of seamen must always be tasty and different, because seamen get bored with monotony. For a long time we had light green table-cloths and we ordered another colour to make some change in the environment. And one of the most important things is hygiene in the kitchen. Usually we have professional cook. Seamen say that if they are on the vessel with good Captain and good cook they will have a very good time.

Our seamen are lazy, including me. For example, they go to dinner after working day. They wash their hands and face, but stay in dirty dungarees. I strongly require

changing their working suit in order to feel beautiful themselves and to please others who are sitting next to them. Of course, I hear different excuses that they had no time because they had too much work. But I teach them that it is very important to go to dinner looking nice and clean, by doing this they show their respect to others.

We were sailing from Brazil to China. During thirty-eight days we did not see land. But people were working and, thank God we had no stoppages. The cook was cooking different kind of food. After two weeks we organised barbecue and I gave the crew more beer to relax.

We must work in harmony and always find compromises when there is any problem in the engine department or on the bridge. In difficult situations I always support my chief engineers and respect their work and they support me too. As one Captain of a battle vessel said: 'You are nobody without me and I am nobody without you.'

If there are problems on the vessel and the whole crew is not happy with the politics of the company, the Captain sends reports to the head offices. The company will not replace the crew but they will replace the Captain. And even if this Captain is a super experienced navigator the company will not forgive him that he created negative atmosphere on the vessel and they will ask him to resign.

For example, once we had stormy weather and we were waiting for roadstead for a long time. We were expecting food from suppliers. We moored in one very small tropical Port where the nearest supply base was very far from the port. One day and a half was needed to bring us the products. We stayed completely without food. We had only salt, mustard, and half sack of wheat. I told to the crew that the company promised that we would receive food supplies soon but unfortunately the car, which was bringing us a food, had broken down. It was very far to go to the nearest city. We found people who were fishing and we bought fish and asked them to bring us potatoes. Between crew were people who were saying: 'What kind of company is this? In our previous company we were paid more and we were loaded with food.' I told them that this could only happen once in ten years. And if you can find a company which has better conditions and will pay you better I will be only happy for you. There is no ideal crew. We resolved the problem and soon the food reached us and everyone was happy. But after three-four months the psychology of a seaman changes. Many of them show fear. They cannot sleep with closed doors or without light.

Crewmembers usually come to the vessel only for high salaries, because on shore they cannot find work with equal money and plus they travel to foreign countries and have a free meal. They work just for good money, but without attachment to the sea and without deep feelings for their work. Or there are some older seamen who are very sick but they still work because they have no other choice and time, in a few years nobody will hire them. All our mess boys are medical doctors but they cannot find work on shore where they will be paid 700-800 \$.

With officers things are different. They have many other stimuli, such as increasing their professional level and promotion. They have ambition to become commanders, Captains. They become attached to the vessel and the sea. Officers and petty officers love their profession of seaman.

Now the mentality of the people has changed. When I worked for 12 years in the Far East I never thought about material things. In those twelve years from cadet I became Captain and this was very important. I had no apartment, no car. I had only my suitcase with my clothes and my favourite cup, which I was brought with me to the vessels. I lost my family there; my first wife left me.

The Soviet system had collapsed. I came to Greece and went to one crew agency and they suggested that I leave them my Marine documents. I was not sailed for two and a half years. I returned to my native land and went to work as a car engineer. All my certificates were still valid when I received a call from crew agency and they say that if I agreed with the contract after two months I had to embark on the Greek vessel. My second wife said that in that moment she could see that my face brightened with happiness. My wife is a very good person, and she feels me. She says that I am a very happy person because I have a work, which I love very much and I live two different lives: at sea and on shore. And this is true. I love my profession and I love sailing. My wife says: 'here on shore you have your one family and at sea you have another one – it is your crew. When the company bought new tanker vessel she said: 'Now you have a new vessel, a new toy to play with.'

The ship is our mammy. In this company I was working on the same vessel for five years and when owners sold her (vessel) I had a feeling that I had lost something, as if I had lost one of my fingers. This vessel was 27 years old. It is old age for the vessel and I called her my old lady. Only I could work on this vessel and she did not cause any damage. But when another captain came on board there were always some problems. She was a mysterious lady. Once I had to deliver the vessel to another very experienced and old Captain and he said to me: 'She is not leaving you.'

Despite being built of iron the vessel has a soul. When we have stormy weather and it is so difficult to turn her (vessel) because she is very heavy lady, I always talk to her: 'please, my dear, help me a little. Do not betray me.' And you can see that she takes speed and the temperature of the main engine increases and we sail well. I often discuss and take advice also from God.

You cannot avoid the human factor and human mistake at sea. Man creates the ship which can sail the ocean and there are mathematical formulas which can calculate the maximum variety of pitching and rolling, and how to sail against waves and how to avoid typhoon and still there are no high technology equipment which could do it better than humans can.

And the most important is that human differs from machine through their emotions and feelings. You feel her when you stay for a long time on the same vessel, you feel her as a part of your body. I gave command: 'Half board left'. Then I realised that she is very heavy and maybe it is not enough, she cannot turn. Then you touch her and say: 'Let's sail, my dear.'

I like very much stormy sea. I love the fluttering sea. Its grandeur and might – I love it. You cannot imagine this power, all its magnificence. The colour of the sea is never the same. Depending on the sun the sea takes different tones of blue and green colour. I like this colour but for me it is associated only with the ship. When I am on shore I do not like the blue colour, any tones of blue.

We become romantic when we are satisfied with our work and with each other: crew from Captain and Captain from his crew. When everything is going well on loading and discharging port you feel burst of energy. My main purpose is to make people be satisfied with their job and encourage them to feel happy and feel joy in order to leave the vessel with positive memories, with feeling that they learn something new and acquire experience. People who were working with me: officers and crewmembers want to work with me again. I like when people say to the crew manager: 'Please, send me to the vessel with captain Sergey Khromikhin'. People always appreciate your support and your responsible relationship with them.

Once a group of seamen were ready for disembarkment but I could not pay them because company did not send 'pay off money' in time. They sent me information: 'let seamen leave the vessel and the crew manager will bring them money at the airport.' I said that the seamen would not leave the vessel before they were paid. I knew that it happens sometimes that the company does not keep their promise and pays them very late. My priority is my crew and I always support them if they need something. It is always mutual. I support my people and people follow me.

I like to work on difficult vessels such as chemical tankers. For example, other captains do not want to stay on these vessels even two months. But I do not like paper work. It takes from me too much time and sometimes I ask the chief officer to do this work for me because I feel the need to communicate with people.

Many seamen are artists. I know many officers who play the piano or the guitar well. I know very well ballroom dancing. In Marine Academy we had lessons twice a week. My younger son is a musician. But he says: 'I will become a Captain like my father.' My older son says that it is enough to have one crazy man in the family and he wants to study computer science.

Russian seamen love the sea. They are the right men for this job. I had a Norwegian friend who was a Captain for five years. Norwegians stay at sea only 5-7 years. When he learnt that I was at sea already 26 years he was surprised and said to me: 'What will you do with so much money?' Norwegian seamen have very high salaries.

I love my work with pathos. I know my work, my vessel so well. For twenty years I have been working closely in this field. And sometimes superintendents from the company come to the vessel and thrust their opinion on you. Or somebody from the office thinks that his loading plan is better than mine. They, of course, cancel my plan. It is disappointing. Or we, with the Chief Officer and other officers, have discussed and agreed to organise some repair works on the vessel. We prepared a team of crew members to paint the vessel and the superintendent comes from the office and says: 'so, we cancel this task, we will do now another task.' We had positive energy and were organised. And they do this in front of the crew. This is not right. And later they realise their mistake but it is already too late. The superintendent became angry because he understood that he was wrong, but he could not do anything, he can never say 'sorry, I was wrong'. And it depresses us. I lose my passion. I try to face it with humour but sometimes I go to my office to calm down. When I know that he was not right and I can prove it, in the beginning I want to send a report to the company about his behaviour, but I know that this will

humiliate him (superintendent) and I do not want to do this. I have been working in the company for many years and I learnt them very well. Many times they contradict themselves. I tell them that you are not right. They can humiliate you in front of your crew and never say 'sorry'.

Our previous owner was a very good man. He was different. He loved us like we were his family, his children. He never gave a command, he always treated us with love. And he talked with captains face to face and said that we are members of his family. When he visited us on the vessel he talked in a friendly manner to crewmembers, asking them what they do not like and what they would like to improve. Our previous general manager was also an excellent man. He loves very much Russian seamen. He understood the psychology of a seaman. A new general manager is a bureaucrat. He is only interested in paperwork.

A Man in a leading position must respect his subordinates. People who can hurt and humiliate others are arrogant, petty tyrants, and egoists.

### *Interview with Captain Andrey Golovanov*

17.10.2005

I have been working in this company since 1999. My first contract was as Chief Officer and 6 contracts as a Captain. I started from Azovsky steam-navigation in 1978. Before, I worked with multinational crews. Now we have a homogeneous crew. All crew are Russian or Ukrainian seamen. Our crews are selected well and you can trust them.

Seamen are romantic and sentimental people. From where does this arise? It is difficult to explain the feeling of happiness of a seaman who walks barefoot on the grass in spring. I was trying to photograph with a camera a sunset at sea, but maybe there are not yet cameras that can capture the beauty that only a seaman can see. The Sea can be stormy or calm but when it is stormy the sun takes the most amazing outlines. It can look like a hedgehog and anything else you can imagine. Have you seen green clouds? It's when the sun's rays illuminate the sea by colouring the clouds in green. You cannot imagine this beauty and the sensation, the feeling it arouses. But how can these feelings influence people?

Marine is maybe the only one of the branches of the industry which is governed by strict principles of hierarchy. All life on the vessel depends on my mood. I do not like to speak with people on a high tone. And I don't want to splash out negative emotions. When I am under a lot of pressure I meditate in order to suppress my emotions. I close my eyes and imagine that I am on the bridge hearing the roaring of the sea and try to relax. The work of crewmembers is very hard. Depending on the plans of the company, I demand strict completion of the work. People who have worked with me know this. When you are demanding it makes our life easier. And people know my requirements regarding their personal behaviour and morality. But they also know that I always call their attention to the beauty of the nature surrounding us. It can be a school of dolphins playing with a vessel or when a whale

following the ship turns on its side and waging with flipper then tries again to catch up with the vessel by saluting us and playing with us, and doing it again and again.

And when after the rain, a huge rainbow appears above the sea, it seems like the ship is entering the arch. By marine tradition a seaman must make a wish and his wish will come true. All this relaxes people from work. We have very intensive working hours and sometimes there is no time even to think about aesthetics. But if it is possible after working hours we organise events which help people have a break. We stop work for one day. For example, when we are passing the Equator we have an ancient tradition of ordaining a seaman. One of the seamen dresses as the god Poseidon and comes to the Captain and we perform speeches from mythology. And after this ceremony we have a barbecue. People like to celebrate this tradition.

The seaman cultivates his aesthetic perception by travelling from very young age. I was also influenced by the books of Jack London, and Fenimore Cooper and stories about Captain Nemo. There are personalities from whom I would like to learn, but I cannot remember a Captain, who could be my role model. It is difficult to model a Captain on my ideal. I try not to make the mistakes which I have seen in other Captains. But sometimes I am obliged to use very strict methods of command where there is no space for aesthetics.

Russians have ancient Marine traditions. But unfortunately we have lost our traditions in the political chaos. I am looking at the young generation; they have a different relation with Marine profession, it is more commercialised. They are not interested in the opportunity to see the world and travel. Only young cadets, which are the second and third generation of seamen can become the future of our Russian Marine. There are still seamen who have stories to tell. My son graduated from the Marine Academy and in his first voyage he was on very difficult vessel. My wife was surprised that he likes this work in spite of difficulties because it was his first practice at sea as a cadet. And I was very proud for him when our crew manager said: 'Andrey, your son is a very good seaman'. I was very much touched. My son took such beautiful photographs from the vessel, which imprint the magnificence of a stormy sea. He was waiting on the deck heedless of danger trying to find the most favourable moment, which shows the power of the waves, this unique combination of white frothy sea with the turquoise colour of the waves.

There are four positions on the vessel: captain, chief officer, chief engineer and the second engineer. And these people create the spirit of the vessel. If we cooperate well together and have a good relationship then everything on the vessel goes well. If this team cannot communicate well then it is difficult to work.

The crew looks at how the Captain reacts in a crisis situation: in stormy weather and during periods of inspection. And then they evaluate the Captain – how he looks after wakeful and difficult nights, and even how he smells. When the pass is long we do not see land for forty days. And it is very difficult to watch continuously movies about the sea; you must have very strong nerves. When seamen meet me in the morning, in spite of being exhausted, I must smile at them and ask how they feel and ask about their families. In the period of working together I also feel responsible also for the families of my crew.

My first contract as a captain... I remember it as if it was today. We were passing from Belfast to Canada, which was only nine days. As soon as we had passed the Gulf of Mexico the storm 'Isaac' was ran after the vessel. Meteorological reports gave me different information. They directed me to the south in order to avoid the centre of storm. I had no more space to change direction; we were in the centre of the typhoon. The waves were growing and kept strengthening. And the worth that the vessel was not in the right course when the 'ninth bank' was approaching us. I talked to the people from speaker: 'We are turning'. And after few minutes the main engine stopped and the vessel was rudderless, and had only 10-15 minutes of floating. The biggest wave was a 14m high. In this situation the difficulty of Captains' position is that you only imagine what can happen and you feel powerless (unequal to such a power). We must not be afraid but must respect the power of nature. When I returned home my wife said that I had more grey hairs.

My people knew that under my calmness I always had a readiness to mobilise people and I feel confident that people will follow me. People trust me, and they know that my demands and strictness have a basis. I try to always be fair with my crew. Sometimes I feel that I am an educator of children, which need professional and moral support. Unfortunately there is a saying among seamen: 'If you do not know we will teach you, if you don't want we will oblige you'. Otherwise the seaman will travel just as a passenger, till the next port of his disembarking.

Sometimes it is very difficult to keep balance in situations when I must choose between safety and commercial interests of the company and Charterers. My priority is always the safety of my crew but very often I have a pressure from the company and from Charterers.

After a first contract as a captain you enter the new stage of a seaman's career. Many of the new Captains cannot stand the pressure of responsibility of Captain's position. Many of them break down and become a drunkard.

### *Interview with Captain Arkady Savin*

3.04. 2006

Managing a crew is complex. The role of a captain is not only giving an order. A captain can't be separated from his crew because they all live on the same ship, 24 hours a day in the same closed environment. A crew is usually 15 to 25; we are so few that we are always bumping into each other-everyone knows what is happening to the other. Everything depends on each person's character and from the character of the captain himself-if the captain is a good person then the crew respects him; if he isn't, they don't. And on this relationship depends our productivity. The attitude the crew will have concerning their work depends on the atmosphere created on board by the captain.

How a contract will go depends to a large degree on how the crew feels and their mood. If they feel strong, they can continue working during the contract. If a person goes to work with a heavy heart, it is not good. Our job is not only physical but a person's psychological well-being is very important as well.

I consider myself a fair person. If I respect my crew, they will respect me. It's my principle never to punish someone before I hear their side and give them another chance-I have seen that this works. If the same person is involved in another situation where he is to blame for a professional or behavioural error, then measures need to be taken. I am not talking about the working relationships among all the crew because there are rules and regulations for working relationships.

I believe I can give strict orders, I can ask politely and even give them my wishes! When I give them a polite order, they feel good and do their work more eagerly. Sometimes, in critical situations, when things need to be done quickly, they have to deal with my strict and intense orders.

But at the end of a contract, when they express their pleasure at working with me and their desire to work with me again, I feel great satisfaction because it shows that I am on the right path. This emotion goes both ways because I have had good experiences with them too.

On the ship you do not need to be an artist; you need to be an artist when you are at the port, in front of the port authorities-those connected with the exploitation of the vessel: representatives of charters, surveyors, agents, suppliers, loading masters. We know what they expect of us so we need to be artists.

On board, everyone knows your true face and you know theirs. Even if you wanted to be fake, you couldn't do it. Everyone knows we do a difficult job and everyone has their own responsibilities, so we know each others' abilities. A real relationship is greatly appreciated on board; you need to show your true self. The more honest you are, the more you are appreciated. You mustn't be an artist-you need to be yourself.

I think it is best to listen to people; I always want to investigate a situation myself. The men know that I encourage them to be open and express themselves. I know most of my crew, so I can approach them and ask them how they're feeling, how the work is going. I know and understand that after 12 hours of hard work, you need to give them a chance to rest. If they are rested, then the following day they will be more productive and with renewed energy.

You need to be open with people and to support and encourage them. There has never been a time when someone has refused to do something that I asked them to. Even when they are tired, if something needs to be done, they will do it for me.

Their lives depend on me and I feel that I responsible for them. It is my responsibility to see that they are healthy and nothing happens to them on board-that they get on and off the ship safe and sound. This is what I do. When there is a storm no one can risk other people's lives. I alone make the decision that the men return home safely. My responsibilities include providing good food, suitable clothing, making sure they get paid on time so their families can receive it on time.

Some people, for example my crew manager, consider me too soft with people, but I manage very well in this way. If a person is worth it, I will do my best to support him. The ideal behaviour on the ship is the humane one. I am in favour of normal

human relationship with people-in this way or work is more productive. Yelling and pressure do not achieve anything. Yet I wouldn't say that I have very friendly relationship with the crewmembers and that I can be all day next to them, but I have assistants who communicate with them. The fact that we have 2 coffee breaks-before and after lunch-is beneficial for our relationship, as it gives me the chance to talk with motormen and other crewmembers; this is something I enjoy.

Because my chief officer and other assistants are highly qualified officers, my communication with them is in the form discussion and even if we have disagreements, I convince through discussion. I only give orders to low ranking officers.

I know my people by observing them and by asking my chief officer and chief engineer about them. When I have learnt enough about someone, I begin to shape an opinion. Of course, the information I get from my chief officer might not be precise so I need to be careful because after each contract I make recommendations for the new seamen -I do not want to comment on someone unfairly. A seaman's character cannot be changed but his behaviour can be improved.

People feel that I care about them and trust me. Sometimes, during a particularly heavy storm, people are under great stress and this can cause panic; if someone starts yelling, it becomes contagious and spreads to the rest of the crew; this can have terrible consequences. This is why the captain needs to keep his calm as much as possible -so he can mobilize the crew. People are sleepless and restless after such a storm.

One of the few pleasures on the ship is the good food. The organization of the food is the responsibility of the chief cook- the food must be clean, well-presented and served on time and I need to check that it is so. If we have time, meal times can be a pleasure. I let people sit longer, talk and enjoy their food but for the most part they eat hurriedly as they have to return to their tasks. The dining area must be clean and it should have some plants as they are a pleasure to look at and create a nice environment.

Once every contract we have a barbeque and of course not on all ships, only on those with dry cargo and bulkers. When the crew is very tired it is good to do this as it relaxes them. We also celebrate the passing of the Equator, the ancient marine tradition in which a new seaman goes to the God Poseidon and according to mythology is ordained a new seaman with a certificate which states that the man has become a real seaman on that day – the men like to celebrate marine traditions like this one.

If the weather is good with clear skies and a tranquil sea, and, of course, work permitting, we call the cook and the engine team to come on the deck to look at the view- a beautiful sunset or a rainbow. Many seamen have video cameras and like to record such moments.

People don't like being let down. If you have promised them something, you must keep your word. Sometimes, when one of two crewmembers needs to leave, it is very difficult for the captain to make that decision.

People always support the captain they love and, of course, I in turn support them whenever it is in my hand. There are times when someone may come and say that he cannot go on and wants to go home. I try to encourage them to keep going or joke with them that the ship couldn't survive without them and this makes them feel better. Whenever possible, you need to give them a break.

The language of seamen is rich in marine metaphors and in folklore in general. When we are on land, we feel nostalgic about the sea. I don't know what it is that we miss most-the sea or the work. A seaman has passion and love for the sea and the ship. I often caress the ship and say: "My good, good ship!" There are many stories and sayings that show how superstitious the seamen are. For example, whistling on a ship is not allowed because it is offensive for the ship and it was said to cause a storm. There is a rhyme that says 'if the sun is red at sunset, then a seaman has nothing to worry about'. Another says 'if a seagull sits on the water, then you should expect bad weather'.

It is known that a seaman behave towards the ship as they do towards a woman. The ship is female and seamen love it like a woman-even I call an old ship "My old lady". When a ship is old and you know it's its last voyage before going for scrap, it's very hard on you-you have a heavy heart. I will never forget taking my previous ship for scrap. All the crew had disembarked and only four of us remained on it- I, the chief officer, the chief engineer and the fourth engineer. The fourth engineer turned off the last diesel generator. We then lowered the flag and sat for a few minutes in my cabin with our heads lowered, not speaking. We then left the ship and went to our hotel, next to the port. Many got drunk with sorrow that night. The next morning, while leaving, we saw the ship for the last time. Our hearts were heavy with sorrow. This ship had been like our wet nurse. It was very difficult to leave it. We knew every part of it and had had many beautiful voyages on it.

The ship is our home, our safety. It's our everything and we give a part of us to it. Even when a contract ends on a ship and you hand over the documentation to the next captain, until the last minute you don't want to leave it. Even when you are making your last step on the trap, when you're setting foot on land and looking at the ship for the last time, you feel great sorrow because you know that tonight you are not going back to the ship-you are going back home to rest.

I'm going to a new ship and I need to train on the new technology and new engine. There is always nostalgia when I leave my home to go on a voyage. My dog knows I'm leaving days before, so he never leaves my side and sleeps beside me.

When new cadets come on board for the first time, they are always teased and tested by the older crew to see how they react and we can get to know them-like a test.

I believe that the way you treat people is the way they will treat you-it's mutual. If you want them to work hard and with their souls, then you need to create the right conditions and a kind atmosphere on the ship-without tension. Treat people with respect and kindness and you will receive the best results. Show them that you care and they will respect and obey you. Everything is mutual. I have already formed a reputation in the company and they have told me that people want to work with me again. These men have worked with me before and have had a pleasant journey.

I want the men to really get a good rest so that mistakes can be avoided. I tell my assistant that if he is really tired, not to hesitate to wake me up. I have told them they must always tell me if they need a change of shift, because a tired seaman cannot be effective on his shift and must be replaced.

If I am tired, I show it to the crew. I don't need to pretend.-we are all humans. It's not possible that the captain is rested when the crew is tired. We are like one family.

### *Interview with Captain Viacheslav Chervanev*

29.03.07

In general, I believe that a captain must be strict rather than lenient. But there are different types of captains - ones who are lenient and you can "weave knits" with them, in other words they are easily taken advantage of. But I am not one of them. Sometimes, this does not please people. And these incidents shape a relationship which is not always smooth, as is the case with families too. The difference is that in a family, arguments are more easily forgotten while on a ship, they are not forgiven. For example, if a person holds inside something that is bothering them, it is much more difficult for him to overcome it.

I think that different people need a different approach. In situations where people are relaxed, you need to be strict. I cannot rely on people who drink. You know that Russian seamen have a problem-they like to drink. In the Soviet system, as the Americans used to joke, people pretended to work and the State pretended to pay. In those days you could not demand anything because they earned very little money and the only thing you could do was threaten them with the KGB. But now, times have changed. Seamen earn a lot of money compared to land jobs. In spite of these high salaries, seamen start drinking again at times. Unfortunately, you must be strict on this matter-I send them home. They must understand that discipline must be like the army. However, not all captains think like me.

Once, I was working in another company...my wife and I have been together for 35 years and we are friends, which is very important because she is a person who will tell me the truth. And when she was on the vessel with me, she told me that I was too harsh with people and that I had to be more lenient with them. I listened to her advice and she influenced me positively. She stayed on board for 3 and a half months and as she was leaving, the crew didn't want her to leave.

On the matter of the behaviour of the captain and the crew in general, there are people you like and people you don't. And this creates different cliques, which may change at any time. On a vessel, the same people are always together. They need to be on stand-by at all times.

Our main goal is to make money for the company. My main effort is to make them work- to keep watch, to clean the tanks, to load and discharge the cargo. A lot depends on the company. I have also worked on other Greek companies-they all had different approaches. What I can say about this company is that it is decent- it makes repairs when they are needed, provide good food and pay good money and on time.

This is why we must behave accordingly and work to bring money to the company. Everything else is not so important.

A lot depends on the captain. You cannot walk around the ship and among people agitated or nervous. I am not sullen as I am pleased with life and most often I smile. Only if there are difficult situations do I become firm and strict.

However, I cannot say that I am a captain who brings people close to him emotionally-we have different ranks in the hierarchy. I can help them with any problems they may have with their families, through the company, but nothing further.

I was a Chief Officer for 12 years and have been a Captain for 10. I like to be in control of everything that happens on board. I know from experience that if a person feels that he is controlled, he will always be alert.

It is my responsibility to check the quality of the food products that come on board. And, of course, a lot depends on how the food is prepared and presented by the cook.

It is important that our crew is all the same nationality and culture-we are all from the former Soviet Union. However, I have also worked with international crews and never faced any serious problems.

In different cultures, people react and express their feelings differently. Nowadays, our Chief Officers and Captains are invited to the company's offices in Greece for an interview before going to the vessel. For example, today I was asked "why Russians behave in this way". A captain must understand his men and behave accordingly. Unfortunately, you cannot treat everyone in the same way. The relationship must remain "normal" but you cannot always achieve this. This relationship must be achieved by both sides-seamen must know why they came to the vessel.

We have a big library on board and we owe this to our crew manager, Victor Korobkin and it impresses all visitors. The crew rarely read serious literature; they prefer light reading. Listening to music together is not very popular as everyone has different tastes. Others are on the computer; others watch movies-some of them violent and although our crew manager Victor Korobkin is categorically against this-men at sea should not watch such movies-I have a more democratic opinion that in their free time they should be able to watch what they like.

People have preferences concerning what captain they would like to work for. Sometimes in my mind I create the ideal crew with which I would like to work. First of all, they must be professionals. For example, if he is a good navigator but doesn't know something I can show or teach it to him. Secondly, their behaviour is important. The seamen should not create conflicts because they affect the rest of the crew on board. Sometimes, a person is simply not a professional. Such people are dangerous at sea.

You need to have the inclination to become a seaman. I can only speak for myself and I don't regret becoming a seaman. Of course, I have had periods with ups and downs. During the Soviet years, I used to have written correspondence with a friend who had fled to USA. The authorities knew that we wrote to each other. In the past, they would have killed me. Instead, they punished me by placing me in the internal lines, which had the worst and oldest vessels and the lowest salary.

You bond with the ship. I remember one sentimental story. I was working on a ship. When it was sent for scrap, it brought tears to my eyes...I had come to this ship when I was 20 and worked there until the age of 31 -I came as a young cadet, fourth officer, and reached chief officer. The years there were my best because at that age you are full of energy and I had many experiences during that time. Perhaps that ship was lucky for me.

People bond with a ship. I have already had 6 contracts with the ship I am going to go on. I have worked with the same crew for 4 contracts. I knew 12 of the 20 crewmembers and all of them have offered something to this ship, painting, decorating the meeting room, hanging a painting on a wall. All these are their creations, and, of course, they will remember this ship.

Professionalism and character cannot be separated from each other at sea. Honesty among crewmembers must also exist. In one word, I would say that you must treat people in the way you want to be treated.

I have never given such an interview before...such a conversation. Sometimes, when have been on a long voyage, you have these thoughts about life. What you have or haven't done in your life yet...I was very sincere in what I said to you. What I said was what I thought. This of course depends on who you are speaking to. If you are uptight, you won't want to and you won't be able to open your heart. For example, with you (Nana) I felt comfortable.

The love of the sea is inside every seaman. Even simple sailors, who did not have the opportunity to become officers, even they have a bond with the sea. I know old sailors who deserve our admiration. These sailors are seamen in their souls. I still keep in touch with such sailors, with whom I started my career. Sometimes, you can learn more from these men – the so-called 'sea wisdom' – than from new, highly qualified officers, many of whom will never gain or possess this 'sea wisdom'. This is something that can never be taught...

### ***Interview with Captain Andrey Chernobrovkin***

8.06.2007

Captain Andrey has been working for Samos Steamship for 6 years.

From the words of the Captain: There are captains who have no direct communication with their people, but only through their chief officer. The seamen

feel disheartened when the captain is distant. Many marine songs refer to the crew as a family, but sometimes this is only true in theory.

People are different. For example, when a Captain goes on a new ship, he must let some time pass in order to get to know the crew. He is first of all interested in the quality of professionalism of his officers. When he calls his officers to a meeting and starts asking direct questions about their professional skills, they are reserved and apprehensive in front of the new Captain. People want a different approach. Sometimes dialogue and discussion are necessary in order for them to open up and become more sincere, thus allowing the Captain to understand them.

Although in Marine Academy we are given a course in psychology, this often doesn't help, since some people do not pay attention to your words. There is a Russian saying: 'some need the whip, others a biscuit'. This means that some people need tight control while others a kind word and inspiration in order to develop and improve. In my experience, people react very well to a simple praise - perhaps because I was lucky. Most crew members progress from this treatment. And I do not do anything - I just encourage them.

This holds true not only with Russian crews, which have the same culture, but also with foreign ones, such as the Italian Captain I once worked with. At first, he was very reserved and kept to himself as the rest of the crew were all Russians. However, during a terrible storm, he was surprised by the courage and team work shown by the crew. After that, he expressed his love and admiration for Russian seamen. He then explained to me that he felt this way because he heard different stories about Russian seamen and was reserved with us in the beginning, but later he became friendly and open with the other Officers. He told me that in another storm, with a Filipino crew, he had been left alone on the bridge while the crew hid in their cabins in fear.

But let's return to our discussion about how a Captain can create a positive atmosphere on a ship. Nowadays, the company is hiring new, young captains who come on board full of arrogance, wanting to project their ego. They tend to want to accentuate every mistake their subordinates make, thus creating a negative atmosphere on the ship and forming a negative image in their crew's eyes. I don't mean pampering the crew, but not humiliating or upsetting them. This doesn't have good results.

A Captain must feel his people. Seamen always need to feel that you care about them, you ask about their wives, their children. Remembering details like their children's names makes the crew feel that you are interested in them. There are examples of captains who do not want to directly communicate or see their people but leave it up to their Chief officers or Chief engineers. I cannot understand this kind of behaviour. How will they be able to trust their crew? At sea, there are so many crisis situations when they will need to save their cargo, their ship or even people's lives. Who will support or follow this kind of captain? How can you reach your goals when your crew has negative feelings towards you?

I remember once, when a young captain came on board to replace me. The Chief Officer I knew had changed into a different person at the prospect of working under

the new captain, about whom they had heard negative comments. The Chief Officer himself told me that the Second officer had become a different, frightened person. At the meeting with the new captain, he was shaking with fear while answering the captain's questions although he was a good officer. With this type of reaction, the performance of the officer becomes worse rather than better. When someone replaces you as captain, you hand over to them not only the ship but also the crew with a brief character description, things that you have learnt with time-their weaknesses or strong points, what they like or dislike etc. and this is very important information for the next captain. If my previous captain had given me this information, it would have helped me work with my new crew. This is the so-called 'sensible knowledge', as you (Nana) called it, the knowledge gained by the Captain through experience.

Nowadays Russian seamen have entered international shipping and are earning high salaries. In the past there was a negative image of our seamen because of their heavy drinking. There were rules and punishment but they were not effective. Today there are "dry rules" and the punishment is financial. If they are found drinking, they pay heavy fines or even lose their jobs. Because the financial factor is very important to them, as they always remember that their families rely on them financially.

I always tell them to wear their safety gear reminding them that their families are waiting for them. Giving them examples of what may happen if they don't is much more effective than repeating orders. It focuses on what is good for them and not what *I* want. I tell them that first of all they must care about themselves.

In practice, it is obvious that emotions are the most effective tool in persuading them. For example, I prepare the vessel for inspection. I have found that it is not effective to follow every crewmember, telling them what to do and correcting them, as each one has their own duties and responsibilities. Whatever depends on me-like explaining to them- I do. But there is always the human factor. Before every inspection, I have a meeting with all the crew where I focus on our goals and targets and I remind them that on this inspection depends not only the owner's satisfaction but also our jobs and reputation. I emphasize that the inspection is for our own good and safety and when I do this, I see in their eyes that we understand each other, we are communicating.

And this knowledge of good communication comes with practice and life experience. I didn't learn it on any course. I lived the experience of becoming a captain – I worked under different captains, some I liked, some I didn't. One gains this knowledge from real-life situations, what he lived through in order to become a captain, to get to the helm.

I try to teach my assistant officers (first-fourth) how to become leaders. But this comes with maturity and depends on individual characters of the officers. One may become a good captain while another never will.

I teach them how to command. This is one of the arts of leadership, where you must find the right intonation to reach their minds and conscience. In crisis situations, the intonation of the captain's commands is vital if the crew is to understand the seriousness of the situation and mobilize rather than panic. Yet the talent of a

captain is not only to give commands but to understand and communicate with people. This is the most difficult ability to master in order to touch their minds and souls.

For example, I had a chief officer who had his first contract with our company, who took initiative, put forth new ideas and showed interest in improving his work. He was 1-2 years younger than me but had remained first officer for a long time because he moved from one company to another. In addition, companies today require many certificates and the age factor also plays a role. He was a good officer, very experienced but we had some misunderstandings because he had the mentality of chief officer. There is a big difference between the duties and responsibilities of a captain and a chief officer and this difference lies in prioritizing our goals and targets. For example, the main goal is to get the shipment safe and on time to its destination so both the owner and client are pleased. However, if the first engineer says there is a problem with an engine, this becomes your priority because if it breaks down it will delay you and cost money and time, resulting in bad performance for us. The criterion for a captain is to prioritize goals. It's only when you find yourself at the helm of the ship that you realize all this. This is also true during an inspection. In preparation for each inspection (port control etc), you need to prioritize goals and to recognize strengths and weaknesses. It's always better to point out yourself to the inspector what needs repairing rather than letting him discover it. This is another very important skill a captain needs to possess-the ability to communicate effectively with the authorities. Many chief officers agree with this but there are others who believe you should try to hide the faults. We need to reach our targets with minimum mistakes and avoiding serious negative observations.

You must be able to put yourself in other people's shoes. In this way, it is easier to communicate not only with inspectors but with the crew or other people too.

Returning to sensible knowledge, the aesthetics on board must be taught and cultivated. For example, a sense of taste can be cultivated if the cook has a smart and neat appearance and the food is well-presented. And although according to marine tradition, officers and crew eat separately, the chief engineer, chief officer or captain always try to be close to the crew by encouraging a tidy appearance and this helps educate people to improve themselves.

As captain, I try to teach the crew to be as well-groomed as possible because affects our reputation and image to any visitor towards our vessel.

Another ability a captain needs to possess is to recognize the individual talent of each officer and to try to use it to the advantage of the whole ship. In this way, the captain can save time by allocating duties to his officers and can show them he trusts them. When you teach you also learn and this is something you must never stop doing.

To return to prioritizing, superintendents, who give directions from land, often do not understand how important it is to prioritize at sea. For example, I had a Port Control and the representative from the offices focused on minor details and informed the offices of these. The office made negative comments on these, to which I replied that I had focused all the crew on the preparation for inspection.

They don't understand that I wasted a lot of time communicating with them, trying to point out the correctness of my actions. But this is very difficult because the office wants to emphasize their importance by pretending that they know what is best for the ship. Finally, I don't say anything, I do my job and I passed successfully the major inspection and I am the one who has won this 'contest'. What matters is that our time is limited and it is a pity wasting so much of it on details.

### *Interview with Chief Engineer Evgeny Tougoloukov*

9.06.2007

The more a seaman stays at sea, the more his character changes. The breaking point is six consecutive months at sea, so there are companies whose contracts last 6 months. But in practice, seamen ask for longer contracts in order to earn more money. However, they often do not take into account the strengths required. At sea, only seamen who have great will can survive.

At sea, a captain is the king and God, and when giving orders he must know their consequences. At the same time, he is the company representative and the boss – and at times, a dictator. The safety of the vessel, the crew and the cargo are determined by international safety regulations.

Life on a ship depends, for the most part, on the captain. The requirements of each company differ. Sometimes, they are very strict in their organisational structure.

A captain may give orders in a strict manner and then turn his back to the crew while another may be more humane and show interest in his people. Paradoxically, I prefer working with people with strict discipline and subordinates who are obedient because it is easier to work with them. Such a team is more productive.

The crew's behaviour depends on ours. If the captain drinks, then the crew drinks. If the captain and the chief officer do not treat people with respect, then they will behave accordingly.

Human relations on board are very delicate. There have been cases of tragedy in the seamen's lives and you need to comfort them at such times.

In general, you can distinguish who will be a good seaman and who won't. For example, you can see who will stay in his cabin and who will still try to work when it's rolling and pitching during a storm. Only the strongest can survive at sea.

If a sailor has a family, it needs to support him. He has two families-one at sea and one at home. The latter needs to be there for him when he is at sea. For example, my son who by now would have become chief engineer abandoned his career after his wife left him because he feared he would never be able to have a family as a seaman. If he feels calm and secure with his family life, then his work goes well. You can see it in his face if he has a happy family life. And this reflects in his work.

The human factor plays a major role. Crews are being reduced due to automation. As a result, the workload is increasing as is the pressure. This is why I believe the optimal period of a contract is 6 months.

Everything depends on the example that the leaders on the ship set. This is very difficult-you can't please everyone. Those who are reserved find it more difficult at sea than open, happy people, who are much more pleasant to work with. Ten days is enough time to see how good a seaman is-how he behaves when he works and towards other people.

The cook has the most difficult profession at sea because he has to please 20 people.

When giving commands, you need to know how to do it so that people can understand. Both sides -commander and subordinate- need to understand each other. There are cases where a commander who dislikes someone constantly makes him run. We need to correct them but never humiliate them. Even the intonation of a command can play a role. It depends on the situation. In emergencies, commands will be curt while in everyday life they might even be a polite request. You need to be able to assess a situation quickly; you need to be able to understand and work with people – this is very important at sea.

If someone does not love his job, it is very difficult for them to stay in this job. I entered the nautical academy at the age of 15, when I viewed this career romantically. My father was a naval officer and I started off as a motorman.

We go out to sea with the aim of returning. We go out to sea to earn a living. Man changes at sea – he returns a different person. Leaders can instil in sailors a love for the work. The cadets come out of the academy with theoretical knowledge of navigation. However, when they come to the ship, you need to teach and show them in practice. In this way, the young cadets begin to develop professionally. At first sight you know who has absorbed your advice.

In order to feel comfortable and work without any problems on board, you need to be a specialist at what you do – this is important. When you know, no one can comment on your work. Then, there are human qualities – discipline and character. The most important quality, though, is professionalism. If you do not have a good character, then people will not follow you. There are always 2-3 people on each crew who disrupt the discipline on the ship and they may lead astray other, weaker, crew members. On one trip, we had such a 'leader disruptor' whom all the crew rejected and wished he would be fired. But, at sea it's difficult to let him go. In the end, we let him off at the nearest port. Unfortunately, Russians also like to drink.

There are cases where a cadet did not do very well in the academy but in practice, on the ship, they become good seamen.

The captain and the chief engineer always need to cooperate and to listen to each other – this is very helpful in our work. However, no matter what their relationship is like, the captain remains the captain and a good example for the crew, so the chief engineer must always try to have a harmonious relationship with him.

During their breaks, at times, we organise barbecues, poetry evenings and in this way they have 3-4 hours to communicate with each other. If people like each other then they work better and as a team. Sometimes, there can be conflicts and it is necessary to replace someone.

After many years at sea, I try to compromise, even if I don't like the captain. There are captains who make illogical demands, yet our personal conflict must not affect our work because we are responsible for the crew and cargo. Captains must have knowledge of human behaviour. If the captain is sultry or makes illogical demands, you will not approach him for advice. On the other hand, he may be a strict administrator but at the same time fair and sensitive.

We demand from our subordinates only what is specified in their contracts. There is a Russian word "must" but this word should not be overused. People know when something needs to be done and will not refuse to do it even if it is after their working time. People who have been at sea for a long time know that there are tasks that cannot wait and must be done immediately. In a company I worked for, if you needed to work overtime, you were later given free time.

We work with Russian crews and we understand each other because we speak the same language, have similar cultures and the same lifestyle. People who work with international crews say that there are times when they face difficulties. I have never worked with an international crew but Russians have experience of working with international crews.

When my youngest son went on his first sea voyage, he didn't like it so he found a land job. This was good because he did not take the job of someone else who wanted to work at sea. If you don't love this job, not even a high salary will keep you here. You know from their first trip if they are cut out to be seamen. I consider it a good thing for someone to admit this even after four years at the academy. Nowadays, the nautical academy prepares more specialised cadets who if this profession does not suit them, they resign. Of course, in order to leave you need to have something else to go to.

I know captains who write poetry, compose music or paint very well. However, in order to do these you need free time. You cannot leave the work behind to write poetry – you need free time. In the past, when we were at sea, the captain had free time to enjoy his art. There are talented captains...Family plays an important role in a person's aesthetic development. And what he gains from his family helps him in his professional development. Because at sea you are in a closed environment, what we bring from our families we can expand on. Sometimes, I may ask a motorman something which he might know better. We must try to have better relationships. For example, the new coffee time we have is a very good idea because even 15 minutes of communication twice a day are very helpful as the crew can converse, and tell stories, which helps release the stress.

A pleasant environment on the ship is not achieved only by the captain and chief engineer but also by the bossman and the crewmen. In this way, you live and work more pleasantly.

Unfortunately, in my career I had a fire on the vessel. We were in the Red Sea but we took all the necessary safety measures and successfully put it out. On that voyage, we had further troubles with the second engineer who 58 years old-near pension- and an alcoholic. This behaviour forced me to go to the captain and request that he be fired. When the decision was made to fire him, he begged us and told us he needed to support his family. I had a heavy heart doing this, but I had no choice- I had given him many chances.

Nowadays, people come to earn money. We need to feel sorry not only for him but also for the rest of the Russian seamen who get a negative reputation because of people like him. Who will feel sorry for us when we get into trouble since we are responsible for the crew? You need to have them on a tight leash. The new generation does not drink. Now everything is allowed in Russia-even Vodka. But young people choose not to drink as they did in the past.

I greatly value the work of our crew manager Korobkin. His job may not please everyone but he does a lot for the image of the company. He 'cleanses' the company of the unprofessional seamen. It's sad to let them go but this is what is expected by professionalism. When you work with good professionals, you do not need to constantly run after them to do their jobs. Under such circumstances, human relationships can develop normally. Both sides are satisfied on the ship and at the same time the owners are satisfied with the results of our work. In this way, you can find free time to relax. However, we-the captain and chief engineer-have a lot of paperwork due to the new regulations.

People who work for the company have already had several contracts with it and they know the demands and all is well. For example, a classmate of mine from the academy works as superintendent engineer for another Greek company which employs seamen from the Ukraine and St. Petersburg. He says that some of the crewmembers who go there have no idea about work at sea and have bought their certificates!

The role of a leader is complex. What distinguishes a good from a bad captain or chief engineer? The human factor.

The Russian fleet has suffered a setback because the best seamen have left for better-paying companies. A very important factor is the salary. However, there are companies which pay good money but do not have stability in their payments or working conditions. Of course, if people are not treated well, no good salary will keep them there.

Every seaman remembers his years at sea. They are unforgettable. I don't know any seaman who regrets his years at sea-even the difficult ones. It is true that two thirds of our lives are spent at sea-8 months at sea and 3-4 months on land. We live and work at sea.

Today there are new, automated ships but most prefer to work on the old ones, where they have left a piece of themselves. I appreciate and remember all the ships I've worked on, even the oldest and the ones in worst condition. A ship is like a person-it has a soul.

Empty ships are like empty homes-without someone living in it. Once, the engine room of the ship I was working on filled with water after a storm and we had to reach a port to disembark. I was full of emotion when I saw the engine room full of water...

Now, I'm going on a ship that I've never been on before. I will have to learn from my previous colleagues because it has a lot of new documentation.

You need to shape a cadet's character while he is still in the academy-when it hasn't formed yet. When he is assigned to a position on board, it's too late to change him.

### *Interview with Captain Sergey Loushnikov*

10.06.2007

What I will tell you will surprise you. First of all, a seaman needs to have resistance to difficult situations and patience. These are qualities necessary for a seaman because life on land is calmer and more of a routine without many unexpected events while on a ship the sea is unpredictable-from one moment to the next it turns from calm to stormy. This affects our mood. The sea is beautiful when seen from land-with different colours. You can sit and admire it. However, it's a different picture from the deck.

Patience and resistance are important marine qualities. The sea might be calm and the sun may be shining in the morning and in a few hours the weather may change and the ship may start rolling and pitching-if you are on land, you simply go home but a seaman has nowhere to go.

Another important quality for a seaman is the ability to co-exist with others. On land a man is different to how he is at sea. When he finds himself in a small community on a ship, if he has bad habits, he can't co-exist. When you are with others in confined space and everyone is close to each other, you need to behave according to the situation and common rules as a Russian saying goes: "You cannot go with your own Bible to another monastery". And this is a very important and strict rule. A trouble-maker cannot survive in a seamen's community. Such a trouble-maker on land can leave and go home while at sea he will create a negative atmosphere which will continue to grow until it affects the rest of the crew. The mood of the crew must always be 'smooth' and without 'waves' or ups and downs; one cannot be feeling very well while another very badly, because such negative poles create clashes. The crew must live harmoniously. Thus, co-existence is very important at sea.

The next human factor is being understanding- being able and willing to help someone in their time of need. A man cannot do everything alone at sea-he needs support, co-operation and compassion from his fellow seamen. You need to be able to understand how the other person feels.

Another very important quality for a seaman is love of his profession. If you have all the above qualities, you must complete with love for this profession. All professions have their good and bad points, but you must always test yourself to the bad points

in order to see if you are suited for this job. You always choose a profession for its good points but in practice you are faced with the bad ones.

A further quality necessary for a seaman is romanticism. A seaman always wants to experience something new and interesting. He wants to live new experiences and relationships. It's more than romanticism, it borders risk. It's like gambling-there's risk and passion. You always wonder what else there is. We all know there is danger- storms, difficult situations, and physical problems. One must always be alert at sea.

Another factor is luck. When a cadet first goes on a ship, he needs to be able to express himself to the captain, to the chief so they can get to know you. And you also need luck because you may be positive and express yourself but the others may not see this. You need luck to be in the right position at the right time. Sometimes a good person might come on board but he is unlucky and things go wrong for him. It is at these times that you need persistence, patience and resistance. If you possess these qualities, then you will reach your goals and a high position. When I began my career as a captain, my mentors asked me what the most difficult thing at sea was. I told them it was the safety of sailing under difficult conditions. They replied 'No'- the most difficult thing is the people. No matter how good a captain you are-with knowledge and experience-without people you are nothing. As a Russian saying goes: "One man in battle is not a soldier." It is an art being able to pass on your knowledge and thoughts to your people- I do this through my assistant, my chief officer. When you are a captain, you can't do everything so it's very important to be able to tell them exactly what they need to do.

Everything depends on the individual character of the person. You live and learn by comparing. You don't want to be bad but you don't want to be too good either. Everything is relative-you can't have grey areas, you need to be clear. I have achieved what I wanted to. You listen and you look and you slowly begin to shape your thoughts - what you want - and to test yourself. A young man who grew up at sea is different. You can spot a seaman from a distance. For example, we were at Frankfurt airport and there was a young man wide-eyed and with an innocent, child-like appearance. I instantly realized he was a seaman. Yet our job is very difficult and demanding. Seamen need to be ready for any unexpected situation. I know a situation where a man became a seaman because of a bet with his friends and yet he became a good captain, even though the original reason was a bet. Most men become seamen for the glory. Now, this glory is starting to bother me because it is not good for a captain to feel like a king. Nowadays, most captains are older. For example, I am 56; my assistant, chief officer is only 29. When the crew manager prepares to replace my assistants, he always warns them that they need to be very serious and well-prepared because the captain is very strict and experienced. This is not very positive as it creates a complex to the men and a fear of letting their boss down. They shouldn't feel like this because I am prepared to teach them. They come shaking with fear although they should see me as an older, more experienced colleague and not as God because when a man bows and obeys, he forgets his responsibilities and loses his initiative. I explain to them that I will teach them new things from my experience but that they need foundations. In our profession, everything is inter-related and if someone doesn't do their job properly, everyone loses- they are all part of the whole.

The sea is not a stable element; we need to be prepared for anything - accidents, storms. In such situations if someone panics, he passes it on to the rest of the crew. If you have a 'God' captain, there is no understanding or communication between them. They can't trust me blindly but they must believe in me. There must be two-way communication. When there is team work and an experienced captain, you can easily find a solution. When the moment for decision-making comes, I make it. When you don't have experience, more mistakes will be made. I discuss with my chief officer and chief engineer extreme situations - fires, storms and accidents - and the final decision can prove fatal. Out of three solutions, only one may be correct and you need to find it.

For a seaman, the feeling of self-sacrifice is very important. If you see that a situation looks dangerous and you have recognized it very early, you can't wait for help, you need to act immediately. When a situation is critical, it's very important, initially, to recognize what sort of situation it is. If it is an almost emergency, if I don't act immediately, the result might be awful. The first thing that comes to my mind is not to panic. Then, you need to visually evaluate and understand the situation, which will decrease your emotional side and increase your intellectual, logical side. What I see is the reality. Then I need to hear all the information about the situation and what preceded it and then make a decision not based on emotion-you need to be completely calm. In other words, first I see and hear and then I feel and then the logical side of the brain makes the decision.

What is emotion? It's when you start trying to find who's to blame. This needs to come after the crisis is over. Before you do that, you need to surpass the crisis in order to save the crew and yourself. You need to leave your emotions aside to have a clear mind. Emotions are an additional energy but not at that moment-it's a waste. However, I am a man who gets wound up but this isn't good. You are the captain and shouldn't blame your assistant. With artists, it's completely different-emotions are everything. A captain cannot and must not be emotional. We are hostages of time and situation- normal and critical situations. In normal situations, I always have limited time for positive action. We are not artists, we must be diplomats, yet being a diplomat is an art. For example, in a situation of fire, I get the information about the fire and its extent and I immediately need to make a decision without emotions. I need to be curt and with strict intonation give my instructions on what my assistants must do. If I have emotions, I will start shouting about who's to blame and why they let it happen. The most important in such situations is to mobilize the men and control the situation. If I stop, the men will panic.

Now about emotions... There are cases where you need to inspire your crew. For example, when we change the cargo from coal to grain, ideally the cargo tanks need to be cleaned thoroughly. However, the men are down and exhausted because they are black from the coal. And there you need to inspire them; your voice needs to be emotionally coloured and to tell them: 'I'm here for you!' 'It's not something difficult!' When you see that the men are inspired and the work gets done, then you become strict again and tell the chief officer in a strict voice: 'I want this job done before we get to the next port!' Here, the emotions will help inspire the people. If you start by yelling, the people's spirits will fall. In critical situations, your decisiveness plays a major role. I'm not a king or God; I also feel down but no one must see or understand it. In such situations, after I give my command, I go to my

room and there let my emotions show, even cry, but always in secret. But all this later, after the crisis. For example, when a storm is coming and you need to mobilize the men, you may show emotion to the men to make them prepare for the storm. The crew understands that the captain is also human and needs help-the work must be done. But in the end the captain's voice must be strict and demanding. Then, everything will be done. It all depends on the situation. If it is a situation which will save lives, then the voice must be commanding. If it is something that can be done later, then the voice can be polite and gentle. Sometimes, a captain can be an artist but never a clown. At times you need to be able to support and at others inspire. There are situations where men are having family problems and commit suicide by jumping from the deck. When I see my men sad, I know they are having problems with their family. When you are at sea, you leave your family behind and this hurts. If a family is close and tight, then everything goes well and their loving wife and friends wait for him. However, if he hasn't heard from his family in a while or left his family with problems, then he carries these negative feelings with him. A captain must recognize the situation and try to decrease the negativity of the situation or accentuate the positive. Very often, this plays a role because he may be a good worker but this affects his work. If you inspire him, he will work better.

The dream of every captain is to have prospects. And this is his greatest expectation.

You try to lift your men's spirits so they will work more and better. And this is where the art of manipulation comes in. You need to have a very deep knowledge and understanding of your men. It is an art being able to recognize the person standing in front of you and his potential. The crew is made up of different people-different education, with technical skills, without skills. You need to have a 'formula' for each one separately. The relationship and understanding with officers is on a different level. I always know who is standing in front of me and his potential. You can't show great familiarity but at the same time you can't act like a king. And this is an art. You must never show the crew that you are fallible.

Most seamen have a craft - photography, song writing etc. in their free time they work on their craft. Our country is our most precious thing and wherever we are in the world, we always feel nostalgic about it.

Nowadays, our work is very difficult and hard. We are constantly loading and discharging. The men do not even have time to communicate with each other and often forget what day or time it is. Our bosses are only interested in business and I cannot disobey them. I like having free time, listening to music and reading a good book and I would like to give the crew more free time but it is not within my power to do so.

I rely only on my experience, on what I know. I have gained this experience from practice and from books. The knowledge of a captain is collective. We learn from our mistakes; from trial and error. You can't find everything in a captain. Every captain has made mistakes but with trial and error we eliminate the mistakes and gain collective experience. There are mistakes that you never admit to making. I made the error, I learnt from it-I don't want to admit it; it's embarrassing. If you tell your assistant you have made a mistake, he may want to try it too. You must tell them what needs to be done, not what shouldn't. Whenever you say 'in my

experience', it sounds very authoritative. You shouldn't suppress fresh, new ideas because when you tell them 'in my experience' they may lose their initiative. You need to let them ask you, to teach them by their own initiative.

On the matter of love of the seamen for the sea and the ship, this is a very personal matter. For example, when I was on a 15-year-old ship, I used to go to near her and talk to her. I would think about all the captains she had trained-because a ship really teaches you. The soul of the ship is a seaman, you talk to her as if she was a real person, and you tell her: 'Oh ship, how many families have you nurtured!' When I leave a ship, I caress her like a human being. Because she is like a fellow human being, you try to take care of her and you remember her name forever.

The ship is never to blame, the mistakes are human. A ship never sinks by herself-there's always human error involved.

We must respect the ship as she is animate; every ship has her character and aura. There are ships that obey, others that don't and others still that are very stubborn. There are everlasting vessels that have been through a lot of storms, but nothing has 'killed' them. They maybe 20-30 years old, they may have had many repairs. They are ships that never die. Owners never want to sell such ships, they keep them forever.

The ship is a lady and you always respect her. In ancient times, there were sailing boats- they had a beautiful female figure and they were beautiful in order to honour the god Poseidon. All the ships had a beautiful, carved female figure to beautify the ship but also to give her a personal characteristic. Nowadays, all this has ceased to exist. The ships may have women's names, or names that have meaning for the owner, like 'Spirit of London', 'Mama Mia', 'Adriatic Star' and 'Legend'. The purpose of the name is to honour the ship. We use this metaphorical relationship everywhere- we have lovingly call our automated navigation system the 'Asenka' so she will obey us and be kind to us.

This romantic aspect is slowly being lost from our lives. There is so much information and everything has been transformed so much that there is no room for romance. Our work is always very difficult-loading, discharging, loading, discharging. It's only when we get back at sea that we can become romantic again. You can't be a realist all the time-you need to have thoughts and dreams about the future. When you escape the routine, nice thoughts come to you as you listen to music, you draw.

Nowadays people are too busy to communicate. When we cross the Equator, we celebrate this event; I have done so at least 50 times. This time, all the people prepared so much for it, they even prepared dress-up costumes, but the company suddenly changed the route and everything was forgotten. Instead of that, we had an 'Evening of Memories'. In this celebration, we gave each man a nickname and these names stayed with them. This event is dedicated to the sea and the seamen. Unfortunately, there aren't many such traditions left. We also celebrate the men's birthdays-the cook bakes a cake to honour the seaman.

There is a marine tradition that in every situation, the captain leaves the ship last. For example, in this company, they sold a ship and I was the last to leave. The reason is that the captain must be sure that all the crew has left the ship safely.

There is a tradition that you never sit with your back to the sea on the ship and when you are on the bridge you must not stand with your back to the wind. This came to us from the time of sailing boats, when the wind moved the ship and when you had your back to it, the wind could die down. This is a superstition, but whenever an assistant on the bridge looks behind rather than to the front I don't like it and I always make him turn around. When you sit with your back to the water, it shows disrespect and may cause an accident.

A good leader requires a combination of elements which are inter-related; without one element you cannot reach the other because you will not have the chain. Every element is significant. For example, if you have work experience which you gained through your feelings and if your ability to make decisions is based on self sense, this is art. This is a circle of abilities. This is a seaman's life. We don't have priorities; everything is a circle of abilities and everything depends on real-life situations. If a ship is in danger of sinking, what matters is: if it is day or night, summer or winter, how big the crew is, if the sea is calm or stormy. There is no set recipe. It all depends on the circumstances.

*Interview with seascape painter  
Iosif Demiris*

9.11.2005

There must be definitely sense floating in the air. This sense will bring you the sea, the sea will bring fear and fear itself evokes many emotions such as self-preservation, hope, disappointment. A lot of emotions are hidden in fear and the sea itself raises fear. Karkavitsas in his book "Bow's words" says "The Sea frightens me". Aivazovsky says "If I am not near by the sea I cannot live". Other Greek painters or poets who were born next by the sea and have adopted the special gift given by the sea share the same feelings.

Let's take me for example. If I did not paint, I would like to write poems about the sea. But you can find poetry in painting. There are altogether. Emotion can be expressed via time. When the artist's cords are stimulated, he starts painting and believes me the sea you imagine is better than the one you see. Because it is within you. You must have the sea inside you, you must have studied weather conditions, time etc. For example me when I listen to Morris Rene's song "La Mer" I paint better, my paintings are better.

In order to make, paint a good sea you need emotion. Emotion is of significant importance. Emotion has fear and awe otherwise the sea drawn would be mediocre. It would be a pose sea. Besides, all painters try to paint seas. Of course a successful seascape needs some experience due to the fact that water is difficult. It doesn't pose, it doesn't stand still. Even when waters are calm, the sea has fluctuations,

colors. Then it is considered to be as the most difficult model because water doesn't have any color. Its color nuances depend on the weather conditions, sky and time.

When I tell seamen that one can witness a red sea they respond that such a sea does not exist, but when we are at the seashore especially in August and I show them the sea, they admit that I was right. There is red, pink sea, any color you want.

One poet believes that sea takes revenge. If you are in its way and it finds you...

Fear together with awe and respect. If a captain feels fear, awe and respect he will do just fine.

As Greek say: "The man's soul is an abyss", you never know what can occur. You don't know the future, the present. You don't know the source of your inspiration.

Hemingway says "Moment to moment" and that he waits for the unexpected. From moment to moment I don't know what will happen to me but I want something to take place. I want my life to start all over again, to be reborn.

Confrontation, "fight" is a good thing; it makes us better and stronger.

Yes, it *diffuses* one's mind and then you reject your work, the things you have done. Not that you don't believe it but you reject it for something better.

Seamen have a passion for sea, they are addicted to it, and sea is their whole life. They enjoy going down to the engine, feeding albatross, gazing at the sea, looking at the storm approaching or passing by.

Brikman was telling me that he had a boat. "I sail towards my sea, I yell all by myself and I tell to myself not to get mad and then I take control over myself again and realize that I am not mad or crazy but I yell just because I like it and because the sea is listening to me" he says.

Sea's infinity is endless...

Apart from the senses – vision, hearing – which psychologists and parapsychologists know better than us, other senses exist as well and sentiments because there are also sentiments. But you have to move on a lot. Ok, we the artists are interested about what we see. The historian says that sea's depiction is an instant visual sentiment and that when you turn your head you do not remember it. You have to make your mind work with closed eyes so as to hear the waters, to hear the roar of the waves, to hear the big wave, the silent wave, the one that whistles...the wind and all the terrible conditions that may occur in the sea because a lot of terrible situations can take place with no visibility. Imagine yourself sailing with 15 Beaufort in a big vessel full of cargo for 20 days? When at some point the vessel reaches a port you see that its shell has been *hammered*. Nobody has hammered it just the waters. Gallons of water were hitting hard the vessel's shell, unbelievable situations lived by seamen making one realize that a lot of courage is demanded in order to breast this kind of waves Seamen are truly brave men armored with courage.

The best work is like pain. A good work of art derives from pain.

Art is not taught science is. There lays the difference. You must have sentiments and be charismatic. In order to be charismatic you must have a lot of sentiments and emotions. If you want to make sentiments that not everybody can see you must be able to *build them up at any time – there are things that cannot easily be seen.*

Colors are important and it is true that you don't get them always right. If you *have* the colors and inspiration and your artistic/ creative cord has been positively influenced in your soul you are ready...these are inspirations. You have to depict your inspiration then you can sit and touch up the picture, make it more beautiful, make it ugly, deform it or even ruin it. That's not the issue. Inspiration is the issue. Inspiration is a loaded sentiment that comes up to you and tells you: "Mister you are obliged to do this!" That has nothing to do with it. You don't act in that way not even for your own sake. You are doing it for the art that you serve. Your work will exist as a work of art but the most important thing for you is to have expressed yourself through it, to liberate everything you have inside. If it is good or not we have the critics and specialists to be the judge of that. If a work of art is good it will have duration if not...

One must be completely free, undistracted and it is this freedom that leads one's hand, mind and its whole existence.

But of course, inspiration is surely transmitted, inspiration is looking for transmitters and receivers, inspiration is something like an electrogenetic power that seeks and finds inductive contact and when it does it is been transmitted via speech, painting, sculpture, etc.

Inspiration gives you any color you can imagine. The painter has it on its palette, therefore using its talent, skill and inspiration he can do everything, don't you thing?

Besides seascape is an instant visual sentiment, what do you see or sense immediately? Everything is moving, the air, the wind, the clouds, the moon, the sea, the vessel everything is mobile.

They live it when they are feeling lonely. Of course that isn't the only reason why they choose the sea. The sea is a lot of things and that is why I keep saying that the sea is a muse. The sea is the artist's, dancer's, painter's, writer's muse.

They live a dramatic/tragic life, it is not pleasant. They make it pleasant with their introversion, every seaman lives alone, that's his companionship because the seamen are on watch there, there one does not clean, all have shifts, one responsibility, one is for all and all for one that is how the vessel works. You know and have read about psychology so you can understand the sentiments when one is sailing, loading cargo, experiencing troubled waters, diseases, different kind of weather conditions. When all that is put behind then everything is just fine. Solitude makes us think and we think on the basis of our education and problems.

Yes, man is improved, evolved through fear. The Holy Scriptures say “Happy those who are afraid”. Now raises the question: What is actually fear or fear with awe and respect?

Seascape, when you are familiar with this art, makes you think of the difficulties, the water’s movement, the wind’s breath, all that that evoke awe. Aivazovsky himself sits on a rock and looks at the sea with awe. By looking at the sea you can get lost in your thoughts. Sea makes you dream, reflect when you are free, infinite, you can do whatever you want. When you are in the ocean and you are swimming for example so as not to drown you know what you see or feel? Minutes seem hours.

It is certain that the sea purifies one’s soul, whatever you want. I can talk about my problems. Mine is to paint while looking at the sea... My problems, problematic, child ambitions and disappointments are vanishing when I am painting. I feel that when I am in front of a seascape, real or just a representation, I forget about everything else and I try to see how every small inch is made, the movements, how does the light fell upon the sea, what’s far beyond...every small detail.

The sea is directly related to the cords of our soul. You start from there and you do not know where to end.

## Appendix II:

### Examples of the Sea Images taken by Andrey Golovanov





















W. B. G.

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