

Book Review:**Jan Fennis, *Trésor du langage des galères***

Dictionnaire exhaustif avec une introduction des dessins originaux de René Burlet et des planches de Jean-Antoine de Barras de la Penne, un relevé onomasiologique et une bibliographie
Tubingen: Niemeyer, 1995 – 2012 pages in 3 volumes.

The thesaurus of the galley language is the latest, most complete and comprehensive study by Jan Fennis. The author is well known for his other works dealing with galleys especially his transcription of the manuscript “Un Manuel de Construction des Galères, 1691”. Fennis visited Malta and included many references from the Archives of the Order in Malta in his thesaurus. He devoted himself to an expert and professional approach to such a highly specialised and particular area of maritime literature. His exhaustive and scholarly survey is a valuable reference work which will remain as a milestone in maritime studies for a long time. The work is the result of a collection, spread over a period of twenty years, of relative material. The scholarly work is of great linguistic interest as it contains every possible vocabulary of galleys comprising a period from the eleventh to the end of the eighteenth centuries. Such a painstaking research contains the origin of the vocabularies with their geographical provenance. The author consulted five categories of sources including literary works, travel accounts, historical works, translations and dictionaries. Each word is followed by its etymological examination and the language study, as background, is explained at length. Technical details are extensively dealt with and the work contains 3911 different words all related to galleys.

Fennis included an onomasiological survey to offset the disadvantages of the format of a dictionary which is normally governed by the compulsory alphabetical system. The author established a system with a logical sequence, comprising 112 paragraphs divided in three main parts describing the organisation, construction, maintenance, description and life at sea on galleys. Consequently one would find it quite easy to consult the work under specific subject headings instead of individual technical words.

The illustrative line drawings by René Burlet facilitate the understanding of certain difficult technical constructional terms. One must congratulate the author because his work was put to the public with such meticulous precision worthy of professional researchers. The book ought to find a prominent place in all public

and private libraries and especially should attract the interest of maritime researchers and lexicographers.

The rather expensive price of DM886 is amply compensated by the three beautiful volumes of the thesaurus containing more than 2000 pages.

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