Proposal for the 3rd MMHN Conference

Apostolos Delis - Ionian University

“Hermoupolis (Island of Syros): The Shipbuilding Centre of The Aegean and its Contribution to Local, National & Interregional Growth, 1830-1880”

The creation of the city of Hermoupolis in the island of Syros, was a consequence of the Greek War of Independence (1821-1829). Soon the new city, in the heart of Cyclades, composed of Greek refugees from Chios, Psara, Smyrna, and other parts of the Ottoman Empire became the most developed city of the new Greek Kingdom. From the economic point of view Hermoupolis was the real financial centre of Greece, based primarily in its special role as a centre of transit trade between Western Europe and Eastern Mediterranean.

This development endured for a period of almost two generations, on which Hermoupolis became the main centre of maritime activities in the Greek Kingdom. All kind of businesses concerning maritime trade operations, including ships sales, loans, insurances, and shipbuilding were took place in such magnitude which attracted sailors, traders and technicians from almost every part of Eastern Mediterranean to dealing with. But the most distinguished factor on which Hermoupolis prevailed any other part of Greece was the shipbuilding activity.

The shipbuilding yards of Hermoupolis were the most vivid sector of maritime activity with a variety of workers of every kind concerning the shipbuilding industry involved in the production of hulls in great numbers, especially between 1830 and 1880.

The evolution of the shipbuilding industry and especially its contribution in the local, national and interregional economy on the above mentioned period is the exact subject under research. The production of hulls each year, the type and size of hulls produced, the prices and costs of production and its comparison with other shipyards, the income of the industry and finally the people or the communities involved and their presence in the shipbuilding activity under the economic and social point of view, are the main questions that are going to be examined.
Curriculum Vitae

Apostolos Delis was born in Volos-Greece in 1971. He graduated from the Faculty of Lettere e Filosofia, University of Bologna (Italy), course in Ancient History in 1997. He continued his studies at a post graduated level with the MA in Maritime Archaeology & History, University of Bristol, in 2001-2002. Currently, he is a PhD student of Ionian University. The subject of his research is: “Hermoupolis (Island of Syros): The shipbuilding centre of the Greek-owned sailing merchant marine, 1830-1880. He also participated in the 5th International Congress of Maritime History, at Greenwich, on 23-27th June 2008.