Proposal for the 3rd MMHN Conference

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“The ports of the British protected United States of the Ionian Islands and their gradual integration in the economy of the Western Europe, 1815-1864”

The Ionian Sea and its Seven Islands (Corfu, Paxos, Lefkada, Ithaca, Cephalonia, Zante and Cerigo), have played an important role in linking the Western and Eastern Mediterranean, already since the era of the Venetian supremacy and dominion (14th-18th centuries). This reality, based upon the geographical position of the Ionian Islands, in the centre of the Mediterranean Sea and in the mouth of the Adriatic Gulf, and on their exportable agricultural products, mainly olive oil, raisins, and wine, seems to be the locomotive power that led Great Britain to incorporate the Ionian Islands into the global chain of her colonial possessions (1815-64). Within this colonial framework the ports of the United States of the Ionian Islands have managed not only to become vital ports for the Mediterranean transit trade, whether concerning the Russian and Danubian wheat or the west-European (British) industrial products, but also to get integrated into the North Atlantic economy of the middle of the 19th century. Consequently, the aim of the present proposal is to identify and present the main terms of this gradual integration of the Ionian Islands, during the era of their British dominion, into the Mediterranean and Atlantic commercial world of the 19th century.
Biographical Note
Panayiotis Kapetanakis has graduated in History and Archaeology from the University of Athens. He has completed his Master’s degree in Modern Greek History at the Ionian University (Corfu). He is currently a PhD. student in the Dpt. of History, Ionian University, with a scholarship from the Research project, titled “Greek Maritime Centers: Identification and Administration of Maritime Heritage of the Ionian and Aegean Seas”, financed by the E.U. and the Greek Ministry of Development.

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