

UrbaNetworks (n° PIEF-GA-2012-331969)



Delos, home of the sanctuary of Apollo since the archaic period, underwent a period of rapid economic development after 167 BCE, when the Romans put the island under Athenian dominion. By granting the port a “duty free” status, it turned it into a commercial base connecting the eastern and western Mediterranean. Between 167 BCE and the sacks of 88 and 69 BCE by the troops of Mithridates and the pirate Athenadoros, the island became an intermediary step in Rome’s commercial relations with the Hellenistic east. According to the literary sources, slaves and luxury goods—all originating in the Middle and Far East—as well as the highly prized Delian bronze statues were traded through Delos. The result of this important economic development and the unprecedented demographic growth that it generated was an accelerated urbanisation on the island—which is attested by the formation of new neighbourhoods and the redevelopment of existing urban and port areas of the island. Although the ancient literary sources stress the importance of the Delian *emporion* (a trading-place), the archaeological record has not provided evidence for the ways in which the commercial centre operated. This was the aim of Marie Curie project *UrbaNetworks* (n° PIEF-GA-2012-331969).

The project focuses on the residential and commercial neighbourhoods of late Hellenistic Delos to address the ties between economic change and urban growth. By analysing the urban development of late Hellenistic Delos in relation to economic activities, public administration and private initiatives, the project examines these districts as microcosms of the broader developments that the island underwent during the Hellenistic period. The urban form of Delos, as of any other city, did not result merely from a single planning initiative but from consecutive decisions and actions of both private and public sectors. However, this obvious fact often gets lost in the previous analyses of the archaeology of Delos. By examining the gradual incorporation of economic activities in the urban fabric of the city, the project evaluates the ways in which uncontrolled factors, such as micro- and macro-scale economic and social developments fit in our understanding of urbanism in antiquity. In doing so, the project shows that the growth of the city of Delos depended on the growing commercial and manufacturing activities that were gradually integrated in the urban fabric and developed alongside the operation of the trading centre of Delos.

A series of articles as well as a monograph have been published, are in print and in preparation by the Principal Investigator (PI) of the project. The monograph (*Portrait of a city in change the emporion of late Hellenistic Delos*) identifies a model of urban growth that to date has been overlooked in the study of Hellenistic and Roman cities, which has primarily focused on the idealized concepts of urban environments—such as monumentality and town planning (research result 1).

In order to further understand the organization and operation of the city of Delos and its *emporion*, the PI initiated an underwater fieldwork survey in collaboration with the *Ephorate of Underwater Antiquities* of the Hellenic Ministry of Culture and Sports as part of the project. The underwater fieldwork survey investigates the submerged area of the Stadion District (or “Quartier du Stade”), one of the new neighbourhoods that were developed at the northeast area of the island during the late Hellenistic period, in order to examine the ways in which this neighbourhood served the Delian *emporion*. There is a relative sea-level rise in the Cyclades of about 2 m from the period under examination so part of the neighbourhood has been submerged. The survey revealed structures (remains of houses and shops or workshops) that form the eastward limit of the Stadion District towards the sea as well as the breakwater. A working hypothesis is that the port of the Stadion District would have served as an anchorage, in order to complement the activities of the main port. The underwater fieldwork survey is an important achievement of the project as it is the first underwater investigation of the island of Delos and will continue after the end of the project.

A 3D digital model (research result 2) presenting the existing state of the neighbourhoods’ structures and using quantitative methods and statistical analysis tools to address the research questions of the project and propose a reconstruction of the neighbourhoods is in preparation. The new mapping data yielded by the underwater survey as well as the new map of Delos that will be published in 2015 by the French School in Athens will be incorporated in the model.

In addition the PI initiated a dialogue between the disciplines of classical archaeology and architectural history by organizing a lecture series in Athens (Greece) that brought together scholars from these fields of study to present case studies of ancient urbanism. Cities were in ancient times, as they continue to be today, hubs of economic, social and cultural development. The complexity of the ancient urban fabric as well as the factors affecting its development raise questions that concern the research fields of archaeology and architecture and ask for a multidisciplinary approach between the two fields. During these lectures architects and archaeologists tackled the different yet converging ways in which the two disciplines approach and try to understand ancient and modern cities. Using case studies, architects and archaeologists addressed the methods that the two disciplines employ in the study of the urban environment. The lectures were live-streamed on the web and are available in video at the repository Helios of the National Hellenic Research Foundation (<http://helios-eie.ekt.gr/EIE/handle/10442/14462>). The speakers will publish their papers in a volume of the series MELETEMATATA of the National Hellenic Research Foundation edited by the PI. This part of the research is relevant for urban policy makers. Both architects and archaeologists intervene into the contemporary urban fabric and an analysis of the distinct methodological approaches of the two disciplines is essential for their collaboration in the context of urban policy making.

Further information about the project, its research activities and outcomes can be found at the project Website: <https://urbanetworks.wordpress.com/>. The PI of the project can be accessed at the following email addresses: mzarmakoupi@eie.gr and MZarmakoupi@bham.ac.uk