



“Museums in motion” Symposium
Friday 3 - Saturday 4 July 2015
Volos, Greece, University of Thessaly

About

‘Museums in motion’ is an international symposium dedicated to exploring the emergent reconsideration of both the content and the role of city museums. It aims to promote dialogue and knowledge exchange among experts drawn from museum institutions and academia, as well as researchers, artists and designers, actively involved in addressing questions on the nature of the technologically mediated urban activity and experience.

‘Museums in motion’ 2015 symposium is inscribed in the framework of Thales **DeMuCiV** Research Program – University of Thessaly, 2012-2015. “DeMuCiV: Designing the Museum of the City of Volos: Historical Research and Development of innovative interactive content for the dissemination of knowledge” is a research program funded by the Greek Ministry of Education and the European Union, concerning the development of interactive content for the Museum of the City of Volos, in central Greece.

‘Museums in motion’ 2015 symposium in Volos, Greece, will consist of two days of paper presentations, panel discussions, and satellite events. The symposium is organized by the Laboratory of Environmental Communication and Audiovisual Documentation (LECAD-EPEOT) of the Department of Architecture, University of Thessaly in collaboration with the Social Anthropology Laboratory and Oral History Archive at the Department of History-Archaeology-Social Anthropology (IAKA), University of Thessaly, and the School of Architecture of the Aristotle University of Thessaloniki.

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Symposium theme

In the 21st century, international initiatives on establishing city museums as a special category of cultural institutions have become more frequent; a phenomenon that is also supported by the founding and activities of the CAMOC/ICOM during the last decade.

Defining what a city museum is and what should accommodate, is not an easy task:

In countries, such as Great Britain, France and the Netherlands -where the constitution of such institutions can be traced back to the 19th century- city museums are often associated with historical museums, which include archaeological collections and representations, as well as artworks.

In the Balkans and Central Europe, city museums are formed around ethnographic collections. Folklore museums located in Greek cities (Nafplio, Larissa and Trikala) could fall in this category. These museums also function as deposit and exhibition spaces for contemporary collections that are relevant to the history of each city.

However, fermentations that took place over the last decade have led to a wide-range of reconsiderations of both the content and the role of city museums. Nowadays, city museums are clearly orientated towards showcasing the development of the contemporary urban space (Nantes, Liverpool, London, Amsterdam) and the transformations that have been inscribed on the landscape of the city as a result of new urban challenges (economic migration, globalization, European integration), with Rotterdam Museum serving as a characteristic example.

Novel academic fields, research tools and methodologies are activated in order to approach (study, comprehend, document, analyze and decode) the collective memory of the city and, in the process, encourages the involvement/contribution of its residents. City museums are open to the society, become actively involved in the life of the city, inspire contemporary artistic creativity, serve as fields for the creative experimentation with cutting-edge digital technology, and function as factors of social cohesion and growth.

Proposed thematic axes to be discussed in the symposium

- Presentation of the work of the three research groups: Laboratory of Environmental Communication and Audiovisual Documentation (EPEOT-LECAD), Department of Architecture, University of Thessaly, Social Anthropology Laboratory and Oral History Archive, Department of History-Archaeology-Social Anthropology (IAKA) and the School of Architecture of the Aristotle University of Thessaloniki.

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- City museums. From past to present: The re-composition of collective memory (exchanges between written historical sources and oral history, creation and management of collections)
- Digital technologies and museums: cultural heritage, materiality and virtual technologies, museum databases in the digital era, interactive exhibits, on-line exhibitions
- Contemporary trends in city museums: open museum, collaborative museum, role and involvement of the artists
- City museums as factors of social cohesion (multiculturalism)
- City museums as factors of growth and development (contribution on revitalizing degraded areas, collaboration with creative industries/ city branding).

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DeMuCiV - Thales Research Program – University of Thessaly

Designing the Museum of the City of Volos: Historical Research and Development of innovative interactive content for the dissemination of knowledge

DeMuCiV is a Research program, funded by the Greek Ministry of Education and the European Union, concerning the development of interactive content for the Museum of the City of Volos, in central Greece.

Background: The Museum of the City of Volos (MUCIV), a new urban museum located in Central Greece, is currently created by the Archive, Museum and Library Directorate of the city of Volos in a renovated industrial building. Volos, a seaport city of 150.000 inhabitants and roughly 150 years of history, has a rich industrial, commercial, intellectual and social history marked by cultural diversity and intense population movements. The proposed project concerns a broad cooperation among researchers and experts in diverse fields of study with the purpose of contributing to the innovative development of new museums' collections and public outreach.

Aim: Three research groups based at three academic departments (History Archaeology and Social Anthropology, Architecture, Urban Planning) and two academic institutions (University of Thessaly and Aristotle University of Thessaloniki) will collaborate in order to conduct primary historical and anthropological research concerning the city of Volos, collect material (archival, testimonial, textual and audiovisual), construct databases and produce three-dimensional and multimodal interactive exhibits for the collection of the MUCIV.

Work packages: The project duration is forty five months and it is organized in 9 complementary and clearly defined and structured work packages: Research Design, Specification and Standards for the Collection of Material, The City of Volos in the Modern and Contemporary Era: Everyday Life, Work, Culture, and Environment, Collection of Oral Testimonies, Volos in the Network of Mediterranean Cities, Sound Archive, Creating the database, Research and Design of Interactive Exhibits, Diffusion of Research.

Results: Contribution to the interdisciplinary production of knowledge on the history of urban development in Greece by exploring in depth and comparatively the historical and cultural landscape of the city of Volos. Development of innovative digital Web2.0 applications that will facilitate the collection and the effective management of relevant data, enable their sustainable enrichment and the diffusion of historical and anthropological data on various

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levels of public interaction (research, continuing education, cultural heritage outreach, etc.). Establishment of productive networks that connect the university and its research capacities with the city and its local communities.

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