

Between memory and oblivion in local contexts: using digital technologies during the archival process to highlight local cultural heritage

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ABSTRACT

Fonds are rarely displayed online in Greece and when this is the case, their content is primarily used for academic purposes, depriving school teachers and pupils of a precious tool that could help transform history learning into an interactive experiential process. Archival digitization, creation of digital collections, user-friendly and attractive web display and suitable digital educational tools' design could be the solution to enhancing local history and creating archival conscience in the younger generations.

CCS CONCEPTS

• Document management • Arts and Humanities

KEYWORDS

Archival digitization, digital humanities, digital archival collections, digital educational tools for local history

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1 Introduction

The contribution of fonds in approaching, understanding, knowing, and interpreting history is indisputable. [1, 2].

Archival content is considered even more valuable in local contexts, where information is usually harder to find and access, and archival conscience is underdeveloped.

All levels of the archival process, are widely based on computer science.

2 Motivation and research approach

The work presented here is the preliminary stage of a broader research based on the *Joseph Keck – Michail Foifa* fonds in Kalamata, Greece, containing tens of hundreds of documents, covering a large period, from the end of the 19th century until the mid-1950 and multiple activities: personal, consular, and commercial. Digital filing, documentation and web display of the archive bring to light unknown information covering historical, social and diplomatic aspects of the town of Kalamata.

3 Preliminary results and future work

Being at the initial stages of a doctoral research, so far, more than 4.500 single page records have been digitized. Parallely, a first study of the content is under way in order to determine the axes of interconnection with local history. The first results have triggered a further investigation on adequate educational digital tools that will serve as a medium between the archive and the public.

Furthermore, testing is being conducted to open-source web-based software that is suitable for cataloguing and publishing archival material according to international archival standards, such as ica-ATOM, Omeka and Collectiveaccess.

Our future work will focus on the use of online tools, collaborative interfaces and their educational potential such as maps, timelines, narrations and data visualizations, following the example of the Kounadis' archive and digital museum [3].

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