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**Maria Drakaki\******Museums of education as fields of cultural management. Comparative analysis in Greece******Šolski muzeji kot področja kulturnega upravljanja. Primerjalna analiza v Grčiji.*****Izveček**

Prispevek poskuša prikazati šolske muzeje v Grčiji kot tudi strategije, ki jim sledijo, in predstaviti njihovo razlagalno izobraževalno in družbeno delo. Sklepi prispevka povzemajo značilnosti muzejev, ki so se odzvali na raziskavo, in predlagajo sistemski pristop. Prispevek priporoča vzpostavitev mreže, ki bo izvajala kulturne strategije v skladu z visoko kakovostnimi načrti, ki temeljijo na znanih kulturnega upravljanja in izobraževanja. Strategije razvoja kulture bodo izhajale iz centra, ki bo zagotovil potrebna sredstva, in bodo hkrati prilagojene ter pripravljene ob pomoči in sodelovanju lokalnih skupnosti.

**Abstract**

The present paper is an attempt to map the thematic museums of education that exist in Greece, as well as to record the policies they follow and reveal their explanatory educational and social work. The conclusions of this paper summarize the characteristics of the museums that were responsive to this research and suggest a model of systemic approach. What is strongly suggested is the creation of a network that will perform cultural politics according to high-standard specifications based on the sciences of cultural management and education. This cultural politics will derive from the center that will provide the necessary means but will be adapted and accomplished only with the help and co-operation of the local societies.

**Ključne besede:** šolski muzeji, kulturna politika, Grčija,**Key words:** museums of education, cultural policy, Greece15<sup>th</sup> Symposium on school life, part 4: Maria Drakaki, Greece (presented by T. Palaic).Visit us / obiščite nas – Sistory: <http://hdl.handle.net/11686/37647>

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## Introduction

In the early 21<sup>st</sup> century, in combination with the redefinition of the role of the museum that dictates its structure as a reflection and rationalization of the very climate of prevailing liquidity in modern society, a growing tendency towards the creation of museums dedicated to education, literacy and school life is observed in Greece.

The history of Hellenism is connected with the history of education already from antiquity years. Education in the course of history from ancient to modern Greek history includes concrete, tangible and intangible testimonies of how each generation functioned within it forming images, representations and symbols. The history of education highlights detailed interpretative approaches of the social role of the school as it historically formed. Additionally, various educational problems and specific historical periods are discussed, or reform phenomena or local educational stories are analyzed.

Scientific research has shown that regarding educational matters the interpretation of the present and therefore the planning of the future must be based on adequate knowledge of the past. The thematic Museums that focus on the history of education reflect the way in which societies perceive their educational past and define themselves in present time, something that deserves particular research interest since, as it is actually the case with the Museum as a cultural phenomenon and institution, they are characterized by deviations in the formulation of policies, objectives and ideologies and consequently in the implementation of specific practices and strategies.

The educational system of a country is an integrated system that is in direct relation with the social, political and economic system of the country and which includes smaller components, such as the school and the classroom. The tendency towards the creation of Museums of Education is related to the necessity of highlighting the role of education in social matters through the institutions and mainly through the educator's personal response to the realities of education in the school and the classroom. For, despite the fact that the very role of the educator is determined by a variety of institutional standards, by the organization of the social relations within the particular educational system, by the formal and informal school curriculum, by the commitments of cultural codes, by the prevailing atmosphere of the market values and the expectations of the reference groups, what ultimately sets the seal in everyday teaching practice is the educator's personal response to the realities of the institution.

As a result, the investigation of the diverse pedagogical process creates a very interesting and particularly broad field of educational practice research which the educational museums can approach through the collection, recording, maintenance, research and presentation of evidence of school life in the past and their connection to the current educational reality, as well as the presentation of them as a significant parameter for the future of education.

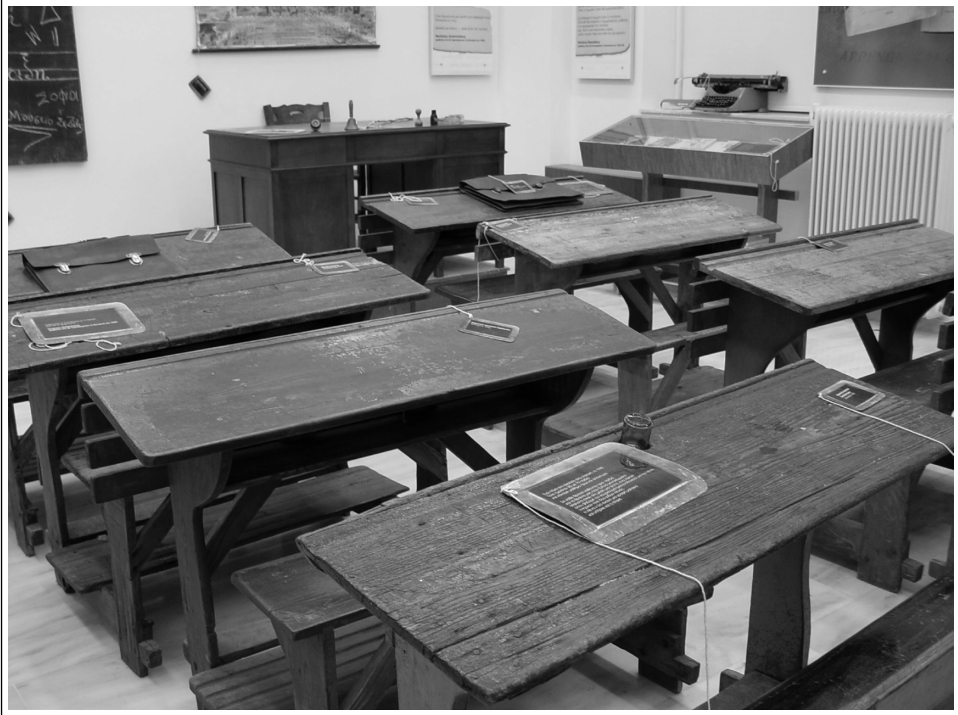
However, in Greece the ever growing trend towards the creation of Education Museums under various names that highlight concepts such as literacy, school life, history of education, combined with the vague state museum policy and the until recently absence of an institutional framework regulating the operation and the conditions under which the recognition and certification of them would be allowed, dictates a dialogue, a dialogue that highlights the importance of the question regarding the organization, strategy, management of these museums nowadays. For this reason, the articulation of Museology and Culture Management Sciences, History of Education and Sciences of Education in general can be useful and meaningful to the museums of this kind, only if it works effectively in shaping interests, skills and questioning within the frame of values of pluralism, rational thinking, documentation, critical thinking and accountability, namely only if they offer reflective perspective to the approach of cultural practices and creations.

### **The Concept of Cultural Management - Brief Description of Research**

The concept of cultural management is within a context of multi-form planning that brings people together in an organizational culture web and guides them towards predetermined cultural goals (Mendis, 2005) The function of the museum is determined both by the professional managers of the organizational system of the museum, and by the types of the museums based on the cultural character, the principles of general (public) interest and their active participation in the digital dimension of the cultural scene in the society of information and knowledge. (Gantzias, G., 2017). For example, nowadays, there are three different distinct types of museums with respectively different distinct cultural characters, as they are recognized by Irene Nakou (Nakou, 2001, p. 145): *the Traditional Type*: the interest of the museum focuses on objects. *The Modern Type*: the interest of the museum focuses on the objects and on the public. *The Postmodern Type*: the interest of the museum focuses on serving the public. Almost across Europe these three types of museums coexist, while in Greece most museums retain the traditional character, although there are efforts to modernize them, for example by setting up the Museums Council (Article 51 of Law 3028/2002)<sup>1</sup>. The museums are also categorized on the basis of the collections they present, the entities that establish and manage them, the range of their collection, the social group they serve and the exhibition space (Nousia A., 2003).

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<sup>1</sup> This advises on issues of state museum policy with presentations on the principles of this policy and the support and specialization measures of it, advises on more general issues of museums following questions by the Ministry of Culture, as well as on specific issues concerning the museums, on the cooperation among the museums and the coordination of their activities, on the implementation of the statutory certification system, on the establishment of state museums as special regional services of the Ministry of Culture and so on (Voudouris, 2003, pp. 281-283).



*School Life Museum of the Municipality of Chania, Crete, Greece. (accessed 10. 10. 2019, [https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:School\\_Life\\_Museum\\_\(2\).JPG](https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:School_Life_Museum_(2).JPG))*

The research presented was part of my duties in the postgraduate program "Management of Culture Organizations" of the Greek Open University which I completed in 2011.

There has been an attempt to map the thematic Museums of Education operating in Greece, in order to record the policies and practices adopted and to highlight their interpretative, educational and social work. As in any scientific and professional field, similarly so in the multitudinous world of museums it is not only legitimate but also imperative to search for examples of best practice which will provide inspiration, stimulation, expertise and constructive cooperation in the process of organizing some other new or developing museum.

Moreover, I am involved as a founding member in the creation of the Museum of School Life, a museum which opened in 2006 under the auspices of the Prefecture of Chania and operates today under the responsibility of the Municipality of Chania with emphasis on its educational function and voluntary contribution and has as a vision to become a vibrant core that will link creatively the pedagogical events of yesterday, today and tomorrow and will serve the values of lifelong learning. Throughout the journey of writing my post-graduate thesis, the comparative analysis of thematic education museums appearing in Greece in the last 20 years and the investigation for examples of best practice in similar mu-

seums internationally which have been based on modern museological theory and are developing on the principle of the necessity of cultural management in the museum organizations has been attempted.

In the research part the qualitative method was chosen as it was considered the most appropriate regarding gathering information, attitudes and perceptions of stakeholders about the particular phenomenon of emergence and growth of educational museums in Greece. Using the structured interview as a tool, a comparative study of museums in Greece which occur under various names as Museums touching matters of education took place. The research attempted to highlight the following aspects as very essential ones for their further fruitful function:

- their comparative analysis in order to determine the degree of their responsiveness to the demands of the modern role of the museum based on the definition of ICOM and the command of lifelong education
- the strengths and weaknesses which the museums themselves spot in relation to their status and identity
- the identification of examples of best practice and of elements that constitute the criteria of best practice
- the degree of their social awareness and commitment to the development of partnerships among them

In summary, the steps followed in the qualitative method adopted are:

- Each one of the interviews was divided into conceptual modules
- All the data of each interview which were included in each conceptual module section were grouped in order for them to constitute the thematic categories
- The same procedure was followed in all interviews
- Similar elements of individual interviews were consolidated to form wider conceptual categories
- The discordant elements of interviews were isolated to be interpreted
- There was an attempt to edit the researcher's comments which were collected during the interviews, in order for them to be integrated in the thematic framework of the interviews
- The researcher, by analyzing content and following the inductive logic, tried to incorporate the theme areas that emerged from all the interviews and to incorporate them in the theoretical framework in order for her assumptions and research questions to be supported or not.

### **The Museums Education in Greece – The Research Questions**

The majority of the Museums of Education in Greece are products of a particular historical period and social situation as is noticed from their starting point (collective initiatives, universities as privileged fields for meeting research and its direct application, expression of the people's culture). However, the cur-

rent "museum reality" appears very different, as the conditions that spawned and fueled the development of these trends have either disappeared or have been radically transformed.

For the purposes of the approach attempted in this research it is necessary to delineate three, in contradictory and paradoxical way, parallel associated phenomena which form the current "reality" of the museum:

Phenomenon One: The number of museums is constantly increasing in Western societies and worldwide. The upsurge of interest of the past is a consequence of the phenomenon that Huyssen (1995) described as culture of amnesia attributing as the opposite of the erosion of the historical consciousness the explosion of memory. The cultural, social, gender, ethnic, national identities are now discussed with the use of terms of memory. (Kaftantzoglou, p. 34) "Search, rescue, excitation of collective memory, not at within the frame of events, but within the frame of long time, investigation of this memory, less in the texts and more in speech, images, gestures, rituals and festive. This is a reversal of the historical gaze- a reversal shared by the general public who is possessed by the persistent fear of loss of memory, a collective amnesia "(Goff, G., p. 139). The upsurge of interest for the past, the "fashion" of historical heritage, the movements defending local, ethnic and minority identities fuel the so-called "explosion of the museum" as the primary institution for the projection of the past, heritage, memory and identity.

Phenomenon Two: The survival of museums in their traditional form tends to become obsolete. Funding from public bodies is continuously decreasing. At the same time, newly emerging and rapidly growing sectors-companies in the tourism, recreation, culture and information industry provide services and products -theme parks, cultural centers, websites, virtual museums which compete with and often prove more attractive than the Museum. Finally, appreciable percentages of the social body, which, according to any definition of the museum, is the recipient of the activity of the institution, express indifference and even aversion to the idea of a visit to museums, as is documented in polls in various countries (Merriman, Negri, Hooper - Greenhill ).

Phenomenon Three: After a long period of indifference to the institution, the social sciences and the cultural studies have, in the previous two decades, focused their interest on museum studies and cultural management.

If we look at them separately, each of these developments has implications on one of the functions of the museum. Their combination, however, raises critical questions that affect all types of museums, especially the Museums of Education which particularly because of their themes (education is a dynamic process that evolves depending on the social, political, historical context) cannot remain trapped in traditional orientations. The questions focus on the need for reorganization and redirection of the Museum at many levels, from the signaling of the objects exhibited, its relations with the public, its teaching practices

-in the broadest sense of the term, the choices of its thematic exhibitions, to its building and technology infrastructure.

Consequently and based on the three phenomena presented before we can assume that the persistence to preserve historical memory and historical educational heritage, the adherence to the past, the lack of public funding, as opposed to the competition in the field of leisure industry and the rapid development of museum-cultural studies underlie the risk of application of amateurism at the birth and journey of the Museums of Education found in our country.

Under these circumstances and given the relevant developments in the field of museums, the question of how these Museums of Education form, operate, survive and develop is a core question in our survey. Another important question is the scope of their management in all their functions and in accordance with the Code of Ethics of ICOM. Finally, an important question is the possibility of blocking of the awareness and action of contemporary orientation and the tactics adopted to connect the past with the present and the future of the educational reality.

### **The Research Conclusions**

The comparative qualitative analysis of the interview data, the speech articulated by the managers of the Museums that participated in the research, formulate the following conclusions:

The Museums' contemporary image shows overlapping actions which are differentiated, partly lined with the local history of the area. However, a minor number of them plan their communication with the rest of or similar museums and they remain trapped in the educational past and the restricted boundaries of the local community under the fear of sterile competitiveness and exclusivity. Only one of them stands out for its tendency to organize temporary exhibitions curated by professional museologists with issues referring to the present and the future of education.

While the statutes of the museums are dominated by the goal of lifelong learning as a key component of modern education, the museums do not seem to support this goal actively. The difficulties in finding resources, infrastructure and personnel in combination with the anxiety about the beginning, as well as the efforts towards consolidation of the anointing of the museum in the minds of their audience, marginalize this objective undermining their specifications and their perspective to be included in the list of the recognized museums in the country. Lifelong learning is an opportunity for the flexible and effective "solution" for all the deficiencies and shortcomings of the education system, which is possible to be utilized by the museums in general, and especially those of education,



*School Life Museum of the Municipality of Chania, Crete, Greece.  
(web sources, accessed 10. 10. 2019)*

through the informal education they provide.<sup>2</sup> The proposal of informal education with the aim of experiential receipt of knowledge through art could offer a lot to the methodology of formal education. The museum is one of the institutions that reflect the ideal of lifelong learning because "in this, the education is a right of all humans and can be enjoyed throughout their whole life, without any limitation, depending on their personal choices" (Kokkos 1999, p. 25).

The belief of the creators that the initiation can rely merely on the willingness and the passion of a team of volunteers that will support the idea, works in most cases as a deterrent to the organization, development and sustainability of the museum. The creators, trapped in their idea, develop 'introspective' behaviors that preclude scientific dialogue and lead to amateurism. Although they emphasize the need for recruiting museum professionals who will have the knowledge and the skills to address the issue of the sustainability of the organizations, it is only seldom that their actions are directed towards this end. The educational process is an act of transmission which is not always carried out in a rigorous academic framework and which mobilizes knowledge between a trainer and a trainee. These two factors should be highlighted on an equal basis through the actions of the particular museums and not primarily the trainer and secondarily the trainee as is the case most often. In other words, the necessity of redefining their exhibition policy which is clearly linked with the clarification of their mission is realized.

The Museums of Education approached through the present study need to make a lot more steps to be able to claim the title of the modern type museum. They are in an "embryonic" stage and although their intentions and visions are

<sup>2</sup> The museum experience is a predominantly educational experience with other components of course, those characterizing the informal education. "The terms of formal and informal education do not qualitatively characterize the educational process, but they simply describe the contribution of the practice that has to be followed by education" (Kakouras-Chroni G., 2002, p. 126).



recorded as high, it is clear that currently they do not satisfy the requirements of the museum. The areas that they should focus on in order to adequately meet the needs of modern times are specified in the latest answer given in the interview of the former director of the National Museum of Education of Rouen in France, Mr. Yves Gaulupeau, (which was from the writer in the frame of the study, but is not listed for reasons of economy of space and time) who refers to the recognition of a Museum Education as a model of best practice: *"The museum should have planning, activities, exhibitions, publications, events taking into consideration the diversity of the audience. In all cases, it must aim for diversity of audience with topics orientated to contemporary reality and the demands of today. There is not best practice without the personal investment, the intellect, the curiosity of professionals, the cohesion in the team functioning in the Museum no matter what the audience's profile is. There is no ideal place regarding the collection and preservation of educational heritage which is not recorded in the consciousness for a long period of time if it is not based on the material's infrastructure which is such as to ensure the sustainability of the Museum as well as funding for the specialized firms. Finally, I would like to highlight the importance of collections in quality and quantity as well as the thematic cohesion. These collections should be subject to a rigorous procedure of recording and preventive maintenance and expertise that will enable the on line digitization and opening of the Museum in research."*

### **Proposals for the future**

As a result, what is necessary is the dialogue and convergence of historical sciences, educational sciences and cultural studies in order for the thematic museums that appear rapidly in Greece claiming the title of the museum education or literacy, bearing various names, to seek new contemporary directions and to connect in a fruitful way the past with the present and the future of education. The articulation of the discussion about the history and proliferation of historical objects, the modern pedagogical theories combined with the concern that has developed regarding the mission and operation of the museum and the necessity of cultural management can become an important factor in the formation of the mission and the work of these museums, which, for the majority of the museums, is for the time being characterized by lack of clarity.

There is a need for a scientifically organized and established exploration of the relationship between these museums and the public, the social body, which, according to any proclamation, every statute and every definition they serve. These surveys form a body of information extremely useful for their management as well as for the wider, at a national level, museological policy and their findings significantly contribute to the evaluation of the presence and the action of the museum and identify the public's expectations from its existence. The necessity and the benefits of a comprehensive research approach to the audience of the museums of education of our country would probably be useful to be identified through a research proposal will be materialized by professional researchers.

In order to attract all social groups' interest in the history of education the particular museums will have to escape from the isolation of their four walls and to become related to the lives of their citizens and to approach issues which are not confined to the school environment. The enrichment of the exhibitions' thematic should be a result of policies orientated towards all aspects of education: school, non-school, in the past, in the present, on the tangible and intangible traces of it. They should put prospects in contemporary education issues, they should open to society without succumbing to dominant policies relating to education. They should become experimental sites which are linked to the present and evolvable. Their transformation in living witnesses is more effective than being "dressed up dolls" in their reports of the past.

The collection of intangible heritage is scarce in the collection tactics adopted. The presentation and use of historical classes, namely their representation should be accompanied with experienced speech (oral testimonies collected with the use of specific methodology) which might make the historical form of the educational process better understandable. The presentation of teaching is currently limited spatially in these museums. The systematic comparison between classes from different eras would be particularly enlightening. In addition, geographic comparisons beyond the national dimension could be presented in their exhibitions.

Finally, it would be fruitful if these museums were addressed by the state through a systemic approach which will submit them to a strategic plan with universal cultural management principles, will identify distinct roles and areas of research, possible specialization in theoretical fields of education, determining degrees of evaluation and certification by a multidisciplinary management authority; always, at the same time, providing a level of freedom which will highlight the needs and interests of the local community which these museums originate from and with the aim of strengthening the development of the necessary initiatives. The detailed presentation of such a model of a museum of education network could be a basis of concern for further investigation and would clearly allow the strengthening of each museum and its development in accordance with the requirements of its modern role.

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### *Summary*

## ***Museums of education as fields of cultural management. Comparative analysis in Greece***

***Maria Drakaki***

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*The present paper is an attempt to map the thematic museums of education that exist in Greece, as well as to record the policies they follow and reveal their explanatory educational and social work. What is also attempted through this paper, is the comparative analysis of the educational –oriented museums that appear the last 20 years in Greece. The dialogue tries to show off the following aspects as crucial to their further constructive function: a) The rate of their correspondence to the demands of the modern role of the museum, based on the definition of the ICOM and the orders of for-life education b) the abilities and weaknesses that the museums themselves trace, in reference to their grounds and identity c) the rate of social sensitivity and their commitment to the development of co-operation among them.*

*The conclusions of this paper summarize the characteristics of the museums that were responsive to this research and suggest a model of systemic approach. This model will subject the museums to strategic planning according to unified principles of cultural management and will define specific roles and areas of research, as well as possible specialization in theoretical sections of education, determining standards of control and certification by a scientific and administrative authority. It is important to emphasize that this model is going to provide degrees of freedom that will highlight the needs and interests of the local society, where these museums belong to, setting as a goal the strength of the development of necessary initiatives.*

*What is strongly suggested is the creation of a network that will perform cultural politics according to high-standard specifications based on the sciences of cultural management and education. This cultural politics will derive from the centre that will provide the necessary means but will be adapted and accomplished only with the help and co-operation of the local societies.*