Cyprus University of Technology

Faculty of Fine and Applied Arts

Doctoral Dissertation

**REVIVING OLD PHOTOGRAPHS ON FACEBOOK:
WHY AND HOW PEOPLE INTERACT WITH DIGITISED
PHOTOGRAPHS**

Myrto Theocharidou

Limassol, February 2023

CYPRUS UNIVERSITY OF TECHNOLOGY

FACULTY OF FINE AND APPLIED ARTS

DEPARTMENT OF MULTIMEDIA AND GRAPHIC ARTS

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Presented by

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Approval Form of Advisory Committee

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Acknowledgments

This lonely PhD journey was enriched by the presence and invaluable help of many people. The first acknowledgement belongs to my research participants for sharing the experiences and thoughts on which this research is based.

I am grateful to the POEM[1] community, and especially to my supervisor Theopisti Stylianou-Lambert and my lovely classmate Lorenz Widmaier, who were always there for me and supported me throughout the whole research project.

I am also thankful to Stelios Stylianou, who encouraged and helped me to apply for the POEM project.

A huge thank you to my friends Phedias, Myrto and Katerina for their insightful feedback, and to Alexandra, Myria, Irene, Maria and Ermina, who put up with my whining and listened to my practice presentations.

I finally wish to acknowledge my family: my parents Michalis and Chrystalla and my sister Nefeli for their unconditional love and support, and my husband, Charalambos, for his companionship, patience and love.

ABSTRACT

This research examines how and why Facebook members engage with digitised old photographs. By adopting a qualitative approach to the research and a case-study-based methodology, the research shows how individuals use old photographs on Facebook and in other photographic sources, including institutional repositories, and emphasises the role of memory in these interactions. The main factors analysed include: the subject matter of the photographs, the motivations behind users' engagement with digitised old images, and the characteristics of various photographic repositories as perceived by the research participants. The findings show that a sense of belonging determines user preference both for specific photographs and for choice of photographic repository. Individuals seem to prefer certain repositories mainly because those repositories give them a sense of belonging, especially through a personal connection to particular photographs. This connection is created by personal memories or post-memories combined with the possibility of participation offered by the repository, which enriches the process of co-remembrance. The research results are analysed through the lens of communicative memory (Assmann 1995) and reflective nostalgia (Boym 2001).

The research suggests that in order to understand the use of digital institutional photographic repositories and the reasons why individuals use or do not use them, the research population needs to be broadened beyond the users of institutional repositories.

Keywords: collecting institutions, communicative memory, users, digitised photographs, Facebook