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GLAMMONS

MUSEUM AND ARCHIVE ASSEMBLAGES AND THEIR NETWORKS WITH OTHER COMMONS

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

In this work we aim to contribute to the aforementioned debates by exploring the incorporation of commons-oriented GLAMs (Galleries, Libraries, Archives, Museums) in broader networks. These initiatives constitute a specific mode of urban commons and offer valuable insights on the intersection of grassroots cultural entities and broader actors. The case studies employed in this work are created and sustained by loose communities that prioritise decentralised modes of governance and collective stewardship, while often using their work towards challenging contemporary hegemonic socio-political and economic conditions, especially through their interventions in the field of public history.

Building on an extensive qualitative research, including 29 semi-structured interviews with members of three GLAM initiatives, we i) discuss commons-oriented GLAMs as part of the new commons landscape, ii) look into the emergence of collective political subjectivities within the aforementioned social systems and the ways these subjectivities enable or undermine the development of relations with different sets of broader actors and iii) map and analyse the broader networks in which commons-oriented GLAMs are partaking and the ways relevant relations are affecting their capacities, autonomy, sustainability, outreach and transformative potentials. More specifically, through these relations, commons-oriented GLAMs address a series of challenges (e.g. limited access to resources, catching-up with digitalisation trends, gaining legitimisation) while also managing to disseminate and communicate their work more effectively.

As seen through the three case studies, the networks that grassroots archives and museums build can be seen in two distinct levels; the networks that are built to support their autonomy and financial sustainability (inputs) and the networks that help them disseminate their work, reach out to different audiences and make their works accessible to others (output). The networks build in these two levels are somehow dictated by the decisions made in the first level (that of governance and management), as the ways grassroots GLAMs are governed (bottom-up, horizontal decision making system, legal or no legal form etc) enables them or disables to do certain things and overall their mode of governance produces a collective political subjectivity, that have certain repercussions in the ways they select their collaborators and the ways they build ties with them.

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ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

ACRONYM	DESCRIPTION
CA	Consortium Agreement
VbA	Value-based Approach
EM	Ethics Manager
DEM	Dissemination and Exploitation Manager
EC	European Commission
GA	Grant Agreement
QE	Quality Evaluator
PMO	Project Management Office
PCT	Project Coordination Team
PMH	Project Management Handbook
QM	Quality Manager
RM	Risk Manager
SB	Supervisory Board
PSC	Project Steering Committee
WP	Work Package
WP-L	Work Package Leader

2. Introduction

2.1. Purpose and Scope

Over the last decade, academic and policy debates around the commons have expanded beyond the management of natural resources, to include the “new commons”, namely modes of governance that develop around urban, cultural and digital resources and infrastructure, prompting a re-examination and evaluation of the ways the commons are sustained and incorporated in broader societal networks. More specifically a limited, yet emerging, stream of research has looked into the operation of the new commons within complex and often conflictual relations with actors of the state, the private sector, the civil society, social movements and the social and solidarity economy.

In this work we aim to contribute to the aforementioned debates by exploring the incorporation of commons-oriented GLAMs (Galleries, Libraries, Archives, Museums) in broader networks. These initiatives constitute a specific mode of urban commons and offer valuable insights on the intersection of grassroots cultural entities and broader actors. The case studies employed in this work are created and sustained by loose communities that prioritise decentralised modes of governance and collective stewardship, while often using their work towards challenging contemporary hegemonic socio-political and economic conditions, especially through their interventions in the field of public history.

In this work we i) discuss commons-oriented GLAMs as part of the new commons landscape, ii) look into the emergence of collective political subjectivities within the aforementioned social systems and the ways these subjectivities enable or undermine the development of relations with different sets of broader actors and iii) map and analyse the broader networks in which commons-oriented GLAMs are partaking and the ways relevant relations are affecting their capacities, autonomy, sustainability, outreach and transformative potentials. More specifically, through these relations, commons-oriented GLAMs address a series of challenges (e.g. limited access to resources, catching-up with digitalisation trends, gaining legitimisation) while also managing to disseminate and communicate their work more effectively. This work is building on an extensive qualitative research, including 29 semi-structured interviews with members of the Museum of Political Exiles, the Oral History Groups (OHG), the Contemporary Social History Archives (ASKI) and the Association of ASKI friends and were conducted from October 2023 to May 2024.

2.2. Contribution to other Deliverables

Deliverable 3.1, part of WP3 “Communities, Commoners and Trauma” builds on the empirical exploration of the hypotheses made in the frame of Deliverable 1.6 (“Conceptualising GLAMs as Commons) concerning the ways commons-oriented GLAMs partake in broader networks. More specifically, it explores and discusses the relations which commons-oriented GLAMs develop with a wide range of actors (state and public, market, civic society, social movements etc.) in order to secure access to resources, disseminate and communicate their work and gain legitimacy.

2.3. Structure of the Document

Deliverable 3.1 is structured as following:

- In the introduction, we discuss the scope of the deliverable and the research questions explored, we provide a short outline of the methods employed and the case studies selected and we relate our findings with lines of research that were developed in the frame of Deliverable 1.6
- In the literature review, we bring out the resemblances between commons-oriented GLAMs and the new commons and we provide an outline of the ways the partaking of the latter (in the form of urban and digital commons) in broader networks has been discussed in relevant academic and policy debates.
- In part 4 (*Commons-oriented GLAMs and the significance of partaking in broader networks: Questions and methodology*), we set the outline of the research conducted in the frame of the deliverable, discussing its continuities with deliverable 1.6 and the major dimensions that characterise commons-oriented GLAMs' collaborations with broader actors, i.e. the motivating factors behind developing collaborations, the role of collective political subjectivities, the challenges that are being addressed through collaborations, the importance of legal status in the ways such relations are developed and maintained. Moreover, we present the methods employed, along with a detailed introduction to our case studies.
- In part 5 (*Commons-oriented GLAMs, collective political subjectivities and issues of governance and management*) we discuss the ways collective political subjectivities have emerged within the GLAMs under study and their role in the development of collaborations with broader actors.
- In part 6 (*Commons-oriented GLAMs in broader networks*) we provide a detailed mapping of the collaborations the GLAMs under study have developed with i) public, ii) third Sector/ civic society/ other commons and iii) market actors, grouping them in two categories, namely *inputs* (e.g. acquisition of access to resources) and *outputs* (e.g. assistance with the dissemination of GLAMs archives and collections). In this frame, we also discuss the ways a series of challenges are addressed through the aforementioned collaborations, along with the role of GLAMs legal statuses in shaping and maintaining them.
- In the last part of the report, building on our findings, we provide a series of general remarks concerning the ways commons-oriented GLAMs partake in broader networks, relating our empirical research with the concepts developed in the frame of Deliverable 1.6.

3. Literature Review: “New (urban and digital) commons” in broader networks

While debates concerning the commons initially developed around “traditional commons” (Parker and Johansson, 2011), namely natural resources, such as fisheries, forests and watersheds, recently, a growing body of literature (e.g. Benkler, 2017; Dolšak and Ostrom 2003; Foster and Iaione, 2016; Lessig, 2003; Parker and Johansson, 2011) has focused on the “new commons”, namely commons social systems developing around material and intangible resources beyond natural ones, including ‘conventional’ (streets, transportation and energy infrastructure etc.) and digital infrastructure, services, public spaces, knowledge, culture etc. A key divergence between “traditional” commons, especially natural resources, and the new commons concerns the fact that the former are characterised by subtractability and excludability (Bendkowski, 2019; Kornberger and Borch, 2015), meaning that their use is diminished by increasing users, calling for the imposition of limitations to overuse. On the other hand, new commons such as knowledge or digital commons, are both non-subtractive and non-excludable (Benkler, 2017), while in urban commons, usage and consumption are intertwined with their production and reproduction and, according to Kornberger and Borch (2015: 7-8), “consuming the city is nothing but the most subtle form of its production”.

3.1. The Urban commons

The urban commons, emerging and operating in the saturated urban space, are often partaking in broader networks and circuits, rooted in complex arrays whereby organisations of the civil society operate, while also interacting with the private for-profit sector, the state, and the non-for-profit sector, and the social and solidarity economy in intricate and even conflictual ways (Huron, 2015). For Bianchi (2022), while theoretical approaches of the commons are useful towards understanding and defining the commons as a political category and a pathway of emancipation from capitalism, empirical understandings of the ways the commons can serve this goal in contexts in which they are embedded in market and state relationships is of crucial importance. Moreover, the urban commons are characterised by different degrees of institutionalisation and partaking in official and informal schemes of urban governance. Additionally, while Harvey (2012: 73) has argued that “a common shall be both collective and non-commodified—off limits to the logic of market exchange and market valuations”, urban commons (e.g. cooperative housing projects, recuperated productive units) – even though not adapting market logics and instruments - often develop within mainstream markets, and as such they interact and can be affected by them to a certain degree. According to Bruun (2015), the commons often emerge within the market environment and depend upon state policies. Moreover, building on the case of housing cooperatives he argues that the latter are not solely shared by the members of the cooperatives but also by the total of the society, while cooperative members are undertaking the role of caretakers of the commons. In this sense, the commons do not belong to strictly bounded communities which have full control over the use and appropriation of resources while defining inclusion and exclusion statuses. Therefore, the need to explore relevant intersections is crucial, otherwise defining the commons as something that can only exist in complete separation from the market and the public sector would simply reproduce the separation between the ‘economic’ and the ‘social’ (see also Latour, 2005).

For Bianchi (2022), the autonomous and emancipatory creation and reproduction of the commons are challenging processes, especially in urban settings in which the commons often have to interact with the local governments towards securing access to resources. In this context, local states have "institutional proximity" to urban societies. Thus, states shall be considered as actors with which the urban commons can collaborate towards obtaining material means for their reproduction (e.g., financial means, access to property etc.) and ensuring their viability. Nevertheless, this relation can often lead to dependencies that undermine the autonomous character and the capacities of the urban commons, as their survival is largely dependent upon external developments (e.g., economic and electoral circles). Therefore, conflict and struggle should constitute a key element within collaborative arrangements between the local state and the urban commons in the pursuit of a prefigurative, autonomous and emancipatory pathway that operates in tension with both capitalism and top-down governance. Empirical evidence suggests that urban commons are increasingly intertwined with local governments and relevant attempts of institutionalisation. Building on the cases of Barcelona, Bologna, Naples, and Milan, different institutional arrangements towards supporting the urban commons through the facilitation of local authorities have been identified. These institutionalisation attempts range from municipalism movement (Barcelona) and new governance public-commons partnerships (Bologna) to the integration of more radical commons arrangements, such as squats and occupied buildings (Naples), as well as more mainstream ones by enabling alternative modes of sharing and collaborative consumption (Milan) (see Bauwens and Niaros, 2017; Kioupkiolis, 2020). Overall, local authorities, along with urban commons initiatives seem to experiment with a variety of collaborative arrangements and the design of relevant governance, legal and policy frameworks.

In this direction, Foster and Iaione (2016) formulate three design principles for the management of urban resources, namely horizontal subsidiarity, collaboration, and polycentrism. Horizontal subsidiarity refers to power sharing between the local government and allies from the civic society and citizens' collectives, groups and associations who are brought out as caretakers of the urban commons, rather than simple users. Collaboration concerns a mode of governance that is building upon partnerships in which heterogeneous citizens' groups, individuals and institutions "co-create and co-govern the city, or parts of the city, as a common resource", through the collective management of resources and the design and implementation of public policies and local strategies. Building on collaborative governance, polycentricism refers to a mode of management of urban resources in which the latter are neither exclusively owned nor centrally regulated. Instead, decisions are taken by a diverse body of actors, while governmental bodies undertake a coordinating role, while also providing the necessary tools and facilitating the process. Löw (2015) referring to experts' (e.g. planners, architects, designers, conservators and social workers) mediation in the management of urban commons identifies two models of public interest representation, namely the pursuit of agreement among different, heterogeneous groups and granting those groups with the rights to create and manage their own social spaces.

3.2. The Digital Commons

In recent years, new information and communication technologies have served as drivers for the emergence and crystallisation of a new commons' paradigm in the digital realm. The so-called 'digital commons' feature open knowledge, software and design (virtual) resources that 'are the fruit of the labour of communities which reside in cyberspace' (Dafermos, 2021: 10). Digital commons harness peer-to-peer (P2P) practices to create and maintain open and shared resources through communing practices (Bauwens et al., 2019). In doing so, digital commons popularise a new economic paradigm of co-operation that produces value through openness, sharing and global networks (Tapscott and Anthony, 2008). The digital commons are building on a mode of decentralised production and co-operation that is pioneered in through the P2P model, representing a socio-technical system where large groups of individuals cooperate asynchronously as producers (of information, knowledge, culture) by 'skipping' market pricing and managerial hierarchies (Benkler and Nissenbaum, 2006; Kostakis et al., 2018). Bauwens (2009: 122) defines 'peer to peer' as 'a relational dynamic' operating in 'distributed networks', where agents and nodes can take independent action through 'voluntary self-aggregation', creating value by assembling tangible and intangible capital assets which they govern in participatory mode.

Peer production does not merely describe a new technological infrastructure or mode of production but a whole new set of interactions and social relations (Papadimitropoulos, 2020). As Kioupkiolis (2022) observes, cyberspace hosts communities of commoners that are open and inclusionary but at the same time fragmented, heterogeneous and geographically unbound. This implies that in digital commons, we do not deal with typical, fixed and geographically-bounded 'communities' but rather with dynamic networks of users operating from across the globe (Ossewaarde and Reijers, 2017). Digital commoners, representing groups of few or many thousand individuals, are mainly self-selected volunteers contributing their spare time to a commons through initiative and self-reliance (Benkler and Nissenbaum, 2006). The digital commoning patterns of collaboration and collective self-government hold tremendous potential to foster the democratic values of plurality, participation, mutuality and openness (Kioupkiolis, 2022: 52), all aligned to GLAMs' agenda. Yet, apart from studying the commoning features of open digital resources and their communities, it is also important to consider how these new commons interact and coexist with the market and the state (Berlinguer, 2021) and what are the avenues for digital commons' integration in current situation.

4. Commons-oriented GLAMs and the significance of partaking in broader networks: Questions and Methodology

In Avdikos et al. (2023), we have conceptualised the ways GLAMs can be assembled as commons dividing an organisation into three distinct levels where commoning practices can unfold. Commons-oriented GLAMs usually employ a horizontal decision-making process that entails assemblies of the community, while the community, most of the time, owns the contents of the archive, library or the museum. Usually, these initiatives take the legal form of associations, cooperatives, charities, etc, where the non-for-profit principle is dominant. The next level is the one where most of the challenges in GLAMs' operations are found. And this is the level of securing the autonomy of the organisation against dependencies from market forces (private donors/patrons) or the state. Commons-oriented GLAMs need to find the right balance to secure the resources that are needed for the organisation to keep performing, while maintaining relations with the market and the state. In that level volunteer labour from the community secures some autonomy and can contribute a lot to the financial sustainability of the organisation, whereas relations with other commons initiatives (e.g. urban commons, digital commons) and broader networks can also contribute significantly to securing basic resources (space, infrastructure, incomes, etc) needed for the operation of the organisation. The third level is the level of openness and accessibility of the organisation, where again the relations with other networks and institutional actors can open up the possibility of reaching out to larger audiences and through co-creation commoning practices distribute their outputs.

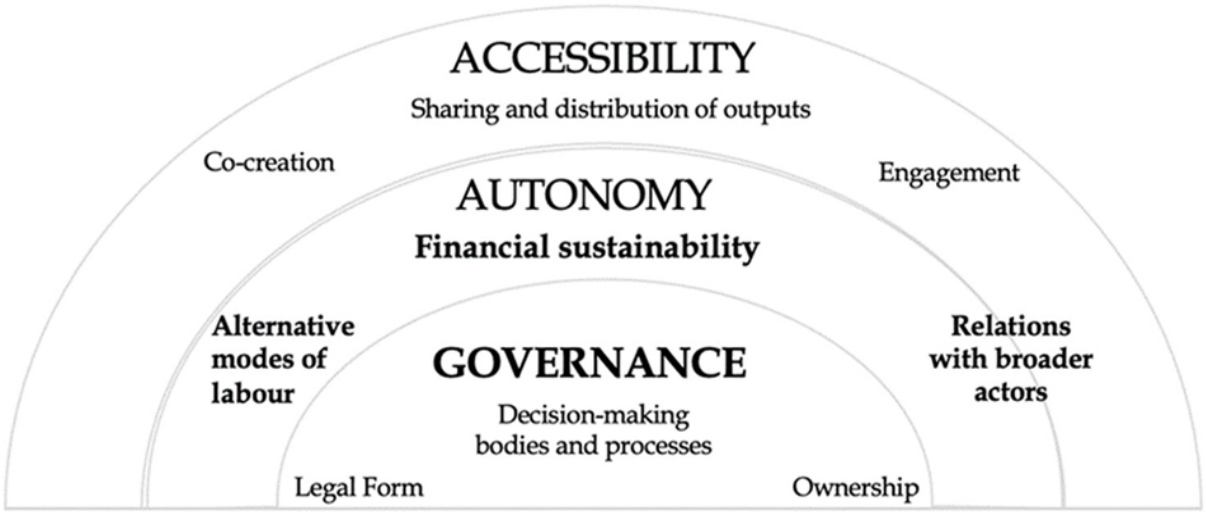

Figure 1: The principles of commons-oriented GLAMs. Source: Avdikos et al., 2023.

In this paper, we would like to explore the ways that commons-oriented GLAMs and more specifically commons-oriented archives and museums, develop specific networks with multiple actors (the state, the market, non-profit initiatives, universities, urban commons, etc) in order to find sustainable ways to finance their operations and distribute their outputs. In that respect, we delve into the second and third level of the above figure, to find out the range, extent and value of specific developed networks. However, this also has some specific connections with the first level of the figure. In that respect, we move to a conceptualization of the commons-oriented archives and museums as

i) collective urban actors that – up to different degrees – adopt commons-oriented practices concerning internal organization aspects and modes of governance (see also Avdikos et al., 2023) and

ii) assemblages that encompass a series of human, material and immaterial components such as pools of people that participate in the creation, maintenance and sharing of the archives through various ways (members of the OHGs, informants, local communities etc.), different modes of labour (wage, volunteer, communal), oral testimonies in a variety of formats (voice and video recordings, transcripts), technical equipment, archival materials (photographs, documents) provided by informants, spaces employed for meetings and dissemination activities, relations of mutual support and solidarity, knowledge and cultural products created by transformations of the archives (theatrical plays and movies, books, scientific works, educational programs etc.)

Building on that, emphasis is placed upon the emergence and the role of collective political subjectivities in the formation and operation of grassroots archives and on the ways the latter develop relations with external actors and become parts of broader assemblages. In this frame, we argue that the ways grassroots archives emerge as political actors (understanding the political as a synthesis of ideological and organizational attributes) directly affects their opening up to broader actors and networks. Moreover, we understand the political as a mobilizing and constituting force of desire for the participants in grassroots archives. Concerning their partaking in broader assemblages, we trace various modes of engagement (such as provision of support, co-organisation of projects and events, provision of access to the archives etc.) with actors of different attributes (Institutional, third sector and market actors, civic society and social movements etc.). Moreover, an overview of the literature on grassroots archives and community museums brings out the multiple ways they resemble the urban commons, building on i) ownership and legal status, along with modes of governance adopted, ii) political and transformative attributes and iii) broader alliances and collaborations.

Concerning ownership and legal status, grassroots archives are most often created, maintained and disseminated by activist and civic society groups, local communities and social movements, unlike ‘traditional’ ones which are mostly created by state and private actors (Flinn, 2007). According to Caswell (2014), grassroots archives tend to adopt decentralized, horizontal modes of governance, along with participatory processes concerning archival creation, while at the same time they promote the increased representation of voices and actors that have been neglected or excluded in conventional, top-down historical narratives. Aligning with broader principles of the commons, grassroots archives prioritise community stewardship and collective action, representing collective efforts towards preserving and disseminating local history, knowledge and practices, often on the antipodes of dominant and established historical, cultural and political discourses, contributing to fostering and maintaining community identity, memory and resilience (Cifor and Gilliland, 2016; Evans, 2007; Millar, 2006). This bottom-up approach to archival creation empowers marginalised groups, enabling them to assert their histories and collective identities in the public sphere (Bastian,

2003). Moreover, apart from practices related to archival creation, grassroots archives often contribute to struggles against gentrification and displacement by preserving the histories and contributions of longstanding communities (Zavala, 2017), while also serving educational purposes through collaborating with schools, universities and research institutions working in the field of history and beyond (Wakimoto et al., 2013).

At the same time, grassroots archives face several challenges - also reflected in the case studies presented and discussed in this work - that can hinder their sustainability and effectiveness. A major challenge lies in the limited access to resources, including financial and technical ones, and their dependence on volunteer labour and crowdfunding (Flinn et al., 2009). Moreover, new challenges derive from the need to catch up with new technologies through employing digital means, tools and environments concerning both the process of archival creation and their connection with broader audiences and local communities (Huvila, 2008). Following Evans and Stevenson (2014), digital technologies can play a crucial role towards enhancing accessibility and engagement in the creation and dissemination of community archives. To overcome these challenges, grassroots archives often create temporary or stable partnerships and collaborations with academic institutions, cultural organisations and public libraries towards securing access to resources and dissemination networks (Sheffield, 2017).

This study is building on a qualitative methodology, through the conduct of 29 semi-structured interviews with members of the Oral History Groups (OHG), the Contemporary Social History Archives (ASKI) and the Association of ASKI friends, and the Museum of Political Exiles of Ai Stratis. Concerning the former, we interviewed 19 OHG members from 8 different groups. Among them, one is developed thematically (i.e. around feminist issues) and the rest of them have specific geographical references, based in both neighborhoods within the Athens metropolitan areas and in peripheral cities and islands. Concerning ASKI, 5 interviews were conducted with 2 members of the board who are also permanent employees and engaged in the day-by-day operation of ASKI, 2 employees and a founding member of the Association of ASKI friends. Finally, 5 members of the board of the Museum of Political Exiles gave us their insights about the operations of the museum. All 29 interviews took place from October 2023 to May 2024 and were conducted and transcribed by the authors. Moreover, the researchers also participated in two general assemblies of the OHG, as non-participant observators and the collection of data was enriched by 3 focus groups/workshops that were held in Athens and online with members of the OHG, during their engagement with WP4 of the project (economic experiments).

Introduction to the case studies

The **Oral History Groups (OHGs)** constitute a unique case of bottom-up, self-organised initiatives' network around the creation and dissemination of oral history archives. The first oral history group was created in 2011, followed by five more in 2013 and 2014, in the midst of the multileveled crisis in Greece, aspiring to provide self-organised, grassroots groups of non-professional historians, yet highly educated, with essential methods, skills and tools in order to collect oral testimonies, mainly from everyday people, and create relevant archives. The oral history groups' network positions itself in the landscape of the large-scale mobilisations that emerged in the aftermath of the 2008 economic crisis, as expressed nationally – through the "squares' movement", as well as internationally, through the "Occupy" and the "Arab spring" movements. While the first groups developed in central Athens, during the following years, relevant groups also operated in smaller cities and islands around Greece. The OHG network is now (2023) comprising approximately 19 distinct groups, three of which developed around specific themes (e.g., the feminist OHG), while the remaining 16 have a specific geographical focus, extending from neighbourhoods to cities and islands. The total of the OHGs, as well as the coordinating body are informal, meaning that they do not have a legal status/ form and ownership.

The **Contemporary Social History Archives (ASKI)** was established in 1992 as a non-profit organisation based in Athens, to preserve the history and memory of the Greek leftist political and social movements. It brings together a community of experts, who share an interest in the genealogy and biography of the Greek New Left. ASKI holds a rich collection of archives (about 5 million files), which are open to the public. These include, among others, the records of political parties of the Greek Left, official reports documenting significant 'chapters' of recent national history (e.g. Resistance to Axis Occupation during WWII, Civil War 1946-49), personal archives and a collection that chronicles social movements, grassroots organisations and ethnic minorities in Greece in the post-WWII era (through oral testaments, photographs etc.). Legally, ASKI is a civic non-for-profit entity. It has about 70 permanent members, a Board of Directors and a small team of expert staff (7 full-time practitioners). All members of the organisation and those taking part in the Board of Directors participate voluntarily and receive no monetary compensation.

The **Museum of Political Exiles of Ai Stratis (MPEAS)** constitutes a grassroots museum, dealing with the history of exiles, as a means of prosecuting and punishing political opponents (originating from the Left and progressive political spectra) in the 20th century. It was created as a non-profit organisation in 1988 by a community of ex-political exiles as an NGO, with the support of the Ministry of Culture that provided a building in central Athens to house its archives and activities. Although allocated far away from the island of Ai Stratis (i.e. the place of exile-in the region of North Aegean, close to Lesvos), the museum constituted an effort on behalf of actual exiles to share their traumatic experience in a direct, unmediated way, as stated by the permanent exhibition's motto "by the people, for the people". MPEAS, beyond exiles' testimonies, offers access to a variety of material traces (letters, pictures, crafts, tools, equipment etc.) that relate with the everyday living conditions and the social reproduction of exile camps. Moreover, MPEAS has collaborated with a wide range of institutions and stakeholders from the CCS and, despite its limited resources, has developed through workshops, events and gatherings, a community that deals with the historic trauma that marked a prolonged period of the 20th century in Greece, seeking to keep historic memory alive while enabling contemporary readings of this 'dark heritage' and its meanings to the present.

5. Commons-oriented GLAMs, collective political subjectivities and issues of governance and management

5.1. Oral History Groups

The first OHGs were established in the early 2010s, amid a turbulent socio-political context marked by massive social mobilizations opposing the austerity measures implemented by the Greek government, the European Commission, the European Central Bank, and the International Monetary Fund. These measures included substantial cuts in salaries and pensions, the withdrawal of the welfare state, and extensive privatization of public infrastructure (Hadjimichalis, 2013). In Athens, widespread discontent over the severe degradation of living conditions was expressed through the occupation of Syntagma Square in the spring of 2011. This occupation resembled the Arab Spring, Occupy, and Indignados mobilizations that developed during the same period (see Kaika and Karaliotas, 2014; Leontidou, 2012; Petropoulou, 2014; Rakopoulos, 2014). Over the last decade, a growing body of literature has explored the ways the massive protests of 2011 triggered and enabled the emergence of smaller, geographically dispersed initiatives in the Athens metropolitan area and beyond. These initiatives, focused on solidarity, mutual aid, and self-organized cultural activities, played a crucial role in bottom-up responses to multiple crises (refugee, environmental, pandemic) that followed the economic one (Arampatzi, 2017; Kouki, Arampatzi, and Pettas, 2022; Kouki & Chatzidakis, 2021; Malamidis, 2020; Pettas & Daskalaki, 2021) while often, these responses took the form of commoning arrangements and social and solidarity economy initiatives (Arampatzi, 2020; Kavoulakos & Kioupkiolis, 2014; Roussos, 2019).

Since the creation of the first group in 2011, we argue that OHGs have contributed to the diffusion of political activity throughout both the Athens metropolitan area and peripheral cities, emerging as significant political urban actors. The political subjectivities of OHGs are built on: i) loose, yet coherent ideological references among their members, ii) the adoption of horizontal, non-hierarchical modes of governance, and iii) efforts to relate their work to contemporary socio-political issues in order to support and raise visibility for disadvantaged and marginalized groups. Regarding the first attribute, even though there is no formal ‘screening’ process for new participants, OHG members acknowledge that most individuals involved come from left-wing or, more broadly, "progressive" political backgrounds. Additionally, the perspectives under which archives are created and discussed are often influenced by analytical approaches derived from critical academic and political schools of thought. Two interviewees stated:

> “yes, most of the members belong to the broader left and progressive political spectrum, even though this is not something we openly talk about” (Chalandri OHG)

> “It would be very hard to incorporate someone who has no class-consciousness or is racist, we have to be able to speak the same ‘language’. For us, the triptych gender-class-race is the way to approach and analyse things” (Femin OHG).

According to OHG members, the "history from below" approach widely adopted by the groups serves as a defining factor that makes them more appealing to individuals with left-wing and progressive backgrounds. This approach stands in opposition to dominant narratives about

specific historical periods and events, and advocates for the democratization of who is entitled to produce historical archives:

> “It's hard for me to imagine someone coming from a background that considers history as a product of authorities having the inclination to share this history. I mean, what’s the point? What do we care about testimonies here? We have history in books, in school textbooks, in university textbooks. That is the official version. So, in this sense, and also in a period of revisionism, even from high political levels, this history here can be an answer. That is, for things that we, who have a common, broadly speaking, political origin, consider as given” (Chalandri OHG)

Along with the loose yet ideological cohesion, the adoption of horizontal and democratic governance and decision-making processes is also a defining factor in the emergence of collective political subjectivities within the OHGs. Following Graeber (2007), the transition from the movements of the 1960s and 1970s to the movements of alternative globalization involved two significant shifts: an increased emphasis on process and practice, and the development of horizontal structures where strict ideological coherence and uniformity no longer play a central role in the emergence and operation of social movements. These trends are explicitly reflected in the operation of the OHGs. In this way, the model of governance and decision-making itself both undertakes specific political connotations and relates to practices adopted by prefigurative social movements.

> “The ‘political’ is something broader that has to do with the ways we choose to be together and work together, so the fact that we work in a collective way is a political choice” (Eptapyrgio OHG).

> "This is a characteristic example of a grassroots, self-organized space with financial independence and a specific political and cultural identity, advocating for self-education […] We believed that for the work we have to do and for our particular character (a team that supports such processes of equal participation and anti-hierarchies), [formal hierarchy] was not necessary for us, nor did we want it to take any form beyond basic coordination and a basic division of labor” (Nea Ionia OHG)

Moreover, the political constitution and role of the OHGs are also reflected in their numerous attempts to connect their work with contemporary socio-political issues and struggles. These efforts reveal the transformative potential of grassroots archives, as they operate at the intersection of archival practices and social justice (see Gilliland and Flinn, 2013). The participatory processes adopted can empower marginalized groups (Caswell and Flinn, 2016) by including them in the production and dissemination of the archives and by developing counter-narratives that challenge top-down representations of these groups. In the case of OHGs, relevant practices focus on: i) migrant and refugee populations, particularly through tracing common themes and issues with the migratory waves from Asia Minor following the Greco-Turkish War of 1919–1922, ii) Roma populations, and iii) claims related to the right to the city and the defense of public and communal spaces.

> “By observing the survival strategies that the older generations developed collectively and individually, we attempt to project these into the future. This could potentially provide direction. What are the current practices within the Pakistani communities? Unfortunately, these communities are relatively closed and male-dominated, and we face various issues that make it difficult to approach them. Naturally, in our logic, the connection exists, because yes, we see it before us. Firstly, the refugee houses still exist and to a large extent are now inhabited by contemporary refugees. This alone, on a symbolic level, speaks for itself. Now, how can we establish this connection methodologically and politically? This is still under discussion, but we are aware of it and we are discussing it. How it will be communicated outwardly? We shall see” (Nea Ionia OHG)

> "Clearly, because it is one of the few records that depict a way of life for the Roma beyond criminality. It is one of the few instances where you see them as people who work, educate themselves, fall in love, and get married. The way they behave and raise their children. This has not been mentioned anywhere in the news so far. Roma are not invited to television shows to give interviews" (Chalandri OHG)

> "Because today's migration and refugee situation are in crisis, and unfortunately, government handling is not the most appropriate, and we are in a very remote and difficult area, I have realized that the people who welcomed these refugees with all their heart in 2015 have now largely changed their stance. Many mistakes have been made over these eight years, and the situation has changed significantly. It's like shifting sands. So, with great caution, if such a connection is made, it can truly offer something significant [...] The oral history group can also influence smaller groups, such as teachers who will form small groups of students. We are here to highlight those people who are not heard, or whose memories and voices have been overshadowed by the dominant narrative. Gradually, we are making small cracks that might lead others to rethink if things are not as we have been told" (Chios OHG)

Finally, the collective political subjectivities within OHGs also build on the assemblage and co-existence of individual, yet related, political identities, knowledge and engagement of their members. A substantial part of these members is – in parallel – engaged in other political, syndicalist, civic society initiatives and associations such as parents' unions, enabling the adoption of previous and ongoing experiences in the operation of OHGs, along with the creation and establishment of ties with broader relevant networks and local communities. In that way, the assemblage of an OHG is related in multiple ways with other local or extra-local assemblages. These ties play a role in finding a number of resources that are missing for the function of an OHG or finding new audiences for their outputs, as we will see in the next section.

> "Yes, most people participate in other initiatives. They are, or had been, involved in unions in their workplaces for example. And locally, many participate in local political organisations and municipal parties but also in cultural groups, environmental movements etc." (Nea Ionia)

Overall, OHGs constitute the field for the creation of collective subjectivities which emerge on the intersection of ideological backgrounds, organisational attributes and political activity that brings up their resemblance to urban and digital commons, especially concerning framings of the latter from the autonomist lens (see De Angelis 2007, 2017; Hardt and Negri, 2000, 2004, 2009; Holloway, 2010; Stavridis, 2016) of the commons theory, which placed emphasis on the prefigurative and transformative political potentials of the commons and their ability to mobilise and empower local communities.

5.2. Contemporary Social History Archives (ASKI)

ASKI's political and ideological foundations are rooted in their emergence and operation within political organisations and parties of the New Left in Greece. The first archival resources upon which ASKI started their operation comprised of the archives of the Coalition of the Left (Synaspismos) political party, which was founded in 1989 as a coalition around the Communist Party of Greece, Interior (KKE Esoterikou) which was active from 1968 to 1987 and operated as the main political branch of the Eurocommunism movement in Greece. In 1992, a group of historians who were also members of Synaspismos, moved to the foundation of ASKI by opening up the party's archive to the scientific community and the broader public, while working

on ways to enrich and expand the archive through contributions from people who experienced the turbulent periods of the German occupation, the civil war and the dictatorship:

> "A very major breach was that a political party's archive was rendered openly accessible. And this is unprecedented on a pan-European level, it is not the norm. In the early '90s, late '80s this idea of the ASKI is starting to be worked on, by Elias Eliou and other historians and party members. So, this was a novelty for that times. The fact that an archive is open and one can access it see without a requirement to be a party member. Anyone can come in and see the archive […] Following that, a community of people, older National Resistance fighters, provided a lot of records and also contributed with both labour and ideas in the first decade of ASKI's operation. Great women of the Resistance and anti-dictatorship fighters and older people that we didn't have the chance to meet personally because we came in later" (ASKI)

Building on this pool of people, mostly including historians, party members and people from a Left political background who participated in major historical events of the 20th century, gradually the ASKI opened up to new people who were not necessarily maintaining strong ties with the political party of Synaspismos (or SYRIZA, a new coalition that was formatted in 2004 and evolved into a political party in 2013).

> "So, our founders, were active political members of the Left, and at the same time some of the most important historians of the post-dictatorship era. So, there was the first core which is gradually opening up […] Nevertheless, we don't have an organic relationship with SYRIZA. Because if you look at the statute, it doesn't mention any party, either then or now. We have no organic relationship at any level. That is, board members or employees are not necessarily SYRIZA members, some are not even SYRIZA voters or supporters" (ASKI)

Nevertheless, as also discussed later, ASKI's budget partly comes from the SYRIZA party, while their offices and a large part of their archive is hosted in the headquarters of the party. The opening up of ASKI to both broader audiences of Left and progressive political backgrounds and members of the scientific community constitutes a shift from their early stages of operation and people running ASKI in the present recognize the limitations deriving from their association with a specific political party. Overall, ASKI members along with the broader community developed around them (e.g. in the form of the "Association of ASKI friends") do come from related political and ideological backgrounds, yet their matching with the political party of SYRIZA is becoming growingly weakened.

As for their legal form and modes of governance adapted, ASKI is operating as a Civil Non-Profit Company, run by an administrative board elected by the company's members (approximately 70 people of relevant academic background), permanent and project-based employees, while the "Association of ASKI friends" which was founded in 2003 operates as both an opening up of ASKI to non-academic audiences and a means to ensure resources that will contribute to ASKI's sustainability. Compared to the case of OHGs, ASKI constitutes a distancing from modes of governance that are adapted by the commons as i) decision-making responsibilities are allocated to an administrative board and ii) the participation to the "core" bodies of ASKI (the administrative board and the general assembly) is limited to people coming from specific educational and professional backgrounds.

Nevertheless, similarly, to attempts made by OHGs, ASKI is trying to relate their work to contemporary socio-political developments and also to create archives concerning contemporary political events. In this frame, ASKI has worked on creating archives concerning the December 2008 riots in Athens and other Greek cities, following the assassination of a 15-year-old student by a policeman, along with archives related to the activity of the neo-Nazi political party of Golden Down. Additionally, ASKI aspires to expand their outreach beyond the

scientific community through reaching out to larger audiences and creating an alternative culture concerning history and contribute to ongoing discussions in the public sphere.

> "For example, we have been started since the late 2000s, since 2008, mainly with the December events to collect material and creating archives concerning contemporary issues. We call it the archive of the year. That is, everything that can be done by the ASKI people, as much as we can considering our availability and collect materials related to social movements, political venues etc. And to create an archive of what will essentially be useful in the future. We have also done that concerning Golden Dawn for example, things like that that are relevant to our interests as ASKI". (ASKI)

Overall, we argue that ASKI rather than operating as an open forum that allows collective political subjectivities to emerge through encounters and negotiations, constitutes a more "professional" network that assembles mostly academics of similar political and ideological backgrounds related to the New Left. Nevertheless, the transformative political possibilities deriving from ASKI lie in the opening up of the archives to the public and their contribution in the field of public history and the triggering of discussions and debates within and beyond the left political spectrum in Greece.

> "We want to participate in the public debates on history and in shaping the historical culture today. And I think that's something that does not solely expresses my desire, but I think everyone here would agree. We want to contribute in understanding history, not in a way of affirmation and reward or charm for specific groups of people. And to look into present through the past, although we are interested in the present. But we are interested in creating a culture, an understanding of the past and a culture of discussion on history, on the past and on history". (ASKI)

5.3. The Museum of Political Exiles of Ai Stratis (MPEAS)

MPEAS was created by former exiles and imprisoned people who held an active role in major historical events in the 20th century, namely the resistance again the Axis occupation (1941-1944), the Greek civil war (1946-1949) and the anti-dictatorship struggle (1967-1974). The vast majority of founding members belonged to the Left political spectrum, being members of resistance organisation and/or political parties and organisations of the Left. As it becomes evident, this ideological background of the founding members provided MPEAS with a rather clear political identity since the first years of its operation. Nevertheless, even in the early period of its MPEAS' operation, there was a clearly stated pursuit for autonomy from specific political parties that may aspired to either gain control over the collection and the archives or present themselves as entitled to represent the legacy of the aforementioned struggles. As a result, most of the political parties of the broader Left spectrum were represented in the formation of the museum through members who had experienced exile and/or imprisonment. As such, MPEAs can be regarded as an assemblage that unites a number of components with diverse political starting points through a collective desire to preserve the historical memory of political exiles, while maintaining a political autonomy, that is also reflected in the composition of its board and in the relations with other actors in Athens and beyond (see next section).

> "It (i.e., MPEAS) was formed by former exiles and prisoners, who had several personal experiences of St. Stratis in particular and wanted to preserve the history and testimonies of that period. In the beginning, the people who formed it were coming from various political backgrounds and the primary goal was to maintain the autonomy of the Museum against any party influence [...] There were people from the New Left, some people from KKE (i.e., the Greek Communist Party), from PASOK (i.e. the Greek Social-Democratic Party), even

a few people from the Right. Nevertheless, they all knew each other and regardless of the political disagreements they had even from the years of exile, they appreciated each other".

In the following years, the MPEAS' board and circle of close collaborators expanded to include academics (mainly historians) who were coming from a Left political background and, since the founding members were diminishing in numbers, descendants of former imprisoned and exiled people. Gradually, since the Greek Communist Part maintains its own archives and collections for the aforementioned historical periods, MPEAS mostly sustained ties with the New Left and Social Democracy. Concerning interventions in the public sphere and attempts to associate their work with contemporary socio-political developments, MPEAS' members confront recent reactionary collective 'heritages' and appropriations of the past and its symbols (e.g. as attempted by the Neo-Nazi Party of 'Golden Dawn') or by linking discriminations in the past to discriminations in the present (e.g. the creation of refugee camps on islands) In this way, historical readings of the past contribute to avoiding disremembering and exposing 'invented' traditions that threaten cultural pluralism and social cohesion. At the same time, given the long period during which people coming from the "defeated" side of the Greek Civil War and their descendants experienced multileveled discriminations even after the restoration of democracy in Greece, MPEAS, though mostly symbolic events in collaboration with official institutions (such as the Presidency of the Hellenic Republic) attempts to bring up and "restore" the legacy and contribution of these people within struggles for social justice and democracy.

6. Commons-oriented GLAMs in broader networks

In the course of their operations, the GLAMs under study have developed relationships with a wide range of actors (see Tables 1, 2 and 3), including public ones (state and local authorities, universities, schools, etc.), third sector and market actors (NGOs, cultural enterprises, etc.), as well as social movements and actors from civic society (political venues, residents' and cultural associations, etc.). Both the mobilizing factors behind these relationships (including dependencies, solidarity, the need for institutional legitimization, multi-level dissemination, etc.) and the purposes they serve (assisting everyday operational needs, disseminating archives to broader and specific audiences, empowering local communities, etc.) show significant variations.

In what follows, we discuss these relationships through the codification of figure 1 that identifies the: i) inputs (i.e., relationships that secure support for GLAMs), ii) output (i.e., relationships that allow GLAMs to provide support to other actors or to disseminate their work), that also include collaborations (i.e., stable or temporary collaborations of co-production and co-creation, mainly in the form of common projects) among GLAMs and broader actors.

6.1. Oral History Groups

Accessibility (Output - 3rd level)		
Public actors	**Third Sector/ Civic society/ other commons**	**Market**
Universities: Provision of access to OHG archives, presentations in conferences, interviews on the OHGs' activity, academic publications	NGOs: Talks & presentations, provision of access to OHG archives	Urban experts (planners, policy-makers, architects etc.): provision of access to OHG archives
Municipalities: dissemination activities	Non-for-profit cultural enterprise (funded by a bank's cultural brunch): Provision of access to OHG archives, co-creation of theatrical plays, short films, events	Media: participation in TV and radio shows
Schools and lifelong learning institutions: Talks and lectures, historical walks, co-creation of educational material	Self-organized political venues: Presentations and public talks	
Museums and Ephorates of antiquities: co-creation of exhibitions	Residents' & cultural associations: Historical walks, talks & presentations, provision of access to OHG archives, co-creation of educational and training activities	

	Environmental groups & movements: Provision of access to OHG archives, co-creation of events	
	Political Party foundations (e.g., Rosa Luxemburg Stiftung): Oral history walks	
	Photography groups: co-creation and participation in exhibitions	
	Association of imprisoned people during the dictatorship: co-exhibition in former prison premises	
	Local community festival & broader cultural events: Public talks & presentations, co-creation of theatrical plays building on oral testimonies	
	Residents: Public talks & presentations, historical walks	
Autonomy/ Financial sustainability (Inputs - 2nd level)		
Public actors	**Third Sector/ Civic society/ other commons**	**Market**
Universities: provision of space, co-creation of lectures and seminars		Producers' association: Provision of equipment
Municipalities: Provision of space & equipment, provision of digital infrastructure, co-creation of research and practice-oriented projects	Non-for-profit cultural enterprise (funded by a bank's cultural brunch): provision of space and equipment, covering running expenses (e.g., flyers' printing)	
Libraries (University and Municipal): Provision of space, provision of digital infrastructure	Self-organized political venues: co-existence with other collectives – sharing of duties, expenses, responsibilities	
Museums and Ephorates of antiquities: Provision of spaces	Residents' & cultural associations: Financial support, provision of spaces & equipment	

	Interpersonal networks: undertaking of technical tasks (e.g., such graphic design), provision of spaces for meetings, provision of equipment	
	Residents: Financial support through events with entrance fee	

Table 1: Relations and collaborations of OHGs with broader actors

As mentioned earlier, OHGs have no official legal status, operating completely informally. This choice results in a series of restrictions, especially concerning access to resources (i.e., equipment, spaces, finances) which are essential for the operation of OHGs.

> "There is financial funding from the municipalities to local associations every year, but we don't have access to it. And why can't we book municipal spaces if we're not an official group? We have to pay for spaces, for example. And also concerning the maintenance of our archive, if we are a formal association, the chances of cooperation are better, for example with the library. So, I understand that issues of power and dependencies may arise, but I think that in the course of time it will perhaps make it a little more difficult for us (i.e., the lack of legal status)" (Chios OHG).

To overcome these barriers, OHGs have developed collaborations explicitly towards gaining access to resources. The main set of actors that provide access to these resources comprises local authorities. Despite the lack of legal status, OHGs, building on interpersonal networks, manage to secure access to infrastructure and equipment through local authorities.

> "From the beginning, when we decided to do the seminars (i.e., for the creation of the OHG), we informed the Municipality, the Mayor, and the responsible deputy mayors and got them to be involved. At least to help us financially to get the cameras and the material that we needed to do the interviews, but also to help us in any way to integrate it into a framework of the administration of the Municipality" (Ilioupoli OHG).

A notable exception among the OHGs under study is the one based in Chalandri, which is officially affiliated with the Municipality, a collaboration that constitutes a stable state-commons partnership. In the frame of this collaboration, the Municipality has granted access to equipment (audio and video recording devices) and spaces for events, incorporation of the OHG in European funded projects, support in publishing efforts, and the creation and maintenance of a digital platform through which the archive can be disseminated. It is noted that, since 2014, the Municipality of Chalandri has been administered by a coalition of the Left, which has also been supported by the majority of the OHG members.

> "An announcement was made by us that we are starting these seminars, and it was also circulated by the municipality. We were given the Cultural Center to do it and, in general, the municipality provides us with spaces. The Municipality also gave us the recorders [...] In the frame of an EU project, a platform about the history of Chalandri was created and in order to be sustainable it had to remain active also after the end of the project. Someone had to take responsibility for it, not the administrative responsibility, but what is uploaded there. So, we made a partnership agreement with the municipality, semi-formal, semi-informal, that all of us, all of us signed while we were there that day, that we would be part of it" (Chalandri OHG).

Moreover, OHGs have also developed collaborations with universities (e.g., Panteion University, Harokopeio University), especially departments that are engaged with the fields of history, sociology and political sciences. Relevant modes of collaboration undertake a rather two-way character compared to those between OHGs and local authorities. Given the fact that – up to date – OHGs' archives are not openly available due to the lack of relevant infrastructure (e.g., a digital platform that would render the archives of all OHG accessible to the broader public), OHGs provide researchers and students with access to their archives, so that the former can process and employ them towards producing scientific outputs. Moreover, academic institutions enjoy the trust of OHGs' members, and, in some cases, they are selected as partners that can ensure the opening up of the archives to the academic and broader audiences through the hosting of relevant archives. Finally, on several occasions, OHGs' members who come from an academic background, present the work they do in the frame of the OHGs, along with their findings in academic conferences and publish relevant scientific work in the form of articles and chapters.

> "We are open to granting access to researchers when the archives are used for academic purposes. We have done so with graduate students and also to students from the "Public History" masters program of the Hellenic Open University. We also give interview to students who want to look into our work" (Eptapyrgio OHG).

> "We have a regular communication with her (a university professor) and she put us in touch with some students, both undergraduate and postgraduate, and we gave them material for their own projects. We also met with a professor from Harokopeio University and we have developed collaborations there as well [...] We are also in talks in order to give our archive at the repository of Harokopeio University. We are of the opinion that the knowledge we produce is important and should be publicly accessible" (Kalithea OHG).

Apart from local authorities and universities, recently, several OHGs have established stable collaborations with primary and secondary schools. These collaborations involve either or both the presentation of OHGs' work through talks and lectures that focus on issues of local history and training activities addressed to teachers and students, so that the latter can design and implement oral history projects on their own. Despite the fact that the lack of formal legal form is also brought up as a barrier in relevant collaborations, several projects have been developed, while working with schools also occupies a big part in OHGs programming for future activities and collaborations.

> "We have worked with schools in Halandri, in Ymittos, in the centre of Athens. We were asked by teachers who were interested in oral history. They wanted to get involved and they asked us to go there and talk about oral history, have the students learn a few things and then interview their parents. We did this short training course and the children did interview their parents, presented the interviews to their teachers and classmates. They made a booklet with photos, with the interview, with their work and presented them to each other" (Chalandri OHG)

> "We also worked with the Second Chance School of Kallithea. We consider it important first of all that there is a Second Chance School in Kallithea. We were approached by the teacher and first we did a presentation. Then we took a tour of the former refugee camps in Kallithea because most of the students who attend the Second Chance School are foreigners, but it was also interesting for the teachers because they are not all from Kallithea. So, we took a walk with the kids and they loved it, they liked it very much. They did their own work on it afterwards" (Kallithea OHG).

Finally, concerning institutional actors, some OHGs have worked with museums, public authorities (such as ephorates of antiquities and political party foundations (such as the Rosa

Luxemburg Stiftung). These collaborations involve the provision of access to spaces for events and the common organization of exhibitions and walking tours.

> "The first seminar took place in a place called the Refugee Museum. This particular space is given to us except during the service period and for whenever we want to have a meeting of our team they give it to us for free […] The exhibition was called Eptapyrgio: Experiences and memories of habitation and was organised in collaboration with the Ephorate of Antiquities, which granted us the space following a request and a proposal that we submitted ourselves six months in advance. At the same time, they took care of all the costs of printing, especially concerning banners, banners. From then on, the work was ours both in the set-up and in what we chose to include in the exhibition […] In a work concerning oral history, memory and trauma, also people from the Rosa Luxemburg Stiftung approached us and we organised oral history walking tours". (Eptapyrgio)

Building on the progressive and prefigurative political attributes of OHGs, the latter are hesitant towards working with market actors and private cultural institutions (even non-for-profit ones) as their members consider the logics under which the latter are operating to be distant from the ones of OHGs. Nevertheless, OHGs are more flexible concerning collaborations with NGOs and small, non-for-profit private organizations, which are mostly built on the basis of participation in events with public talks and presentations and also activities in the frame of larger projects.

> "There has been a project, the Municipality has been awarded a project for four years concerning the Adrianio Aqueduct, for which we have several oral testimonies. In the frame of this project, we talked with XXX[1] and we proposed some activities and small projects to the Municipality. The Municipality liked what we proposed and we got engaged in the implementation as a collaborator, not a partner, because we cannot get involved officially. Yet, this didn't stop us from organizing walks, historical walks, together with the non-for-profit company and the Municipality concerning refugee settlements in the area" (Chalandri OHG)

Nevertheless, the constraints deriving from the inability to acquire funding through conventional channels has led to direct and indirect collaborations with market actors in two occasions. In this frame, a local producers' association has approached an OHG in order to provide financial support, since the latter is intending on creating an archive on the history of these producers' communities and practices. The second, indirect channel of support concerns the provision of access to infrastructure and equipment by a major Greek bank's cultural foundation which is however mediated by a non-for-profit association. At the same time, the OHG has presented its work in events organized by the bank's cultural foundation, while having a stable collaboration with the non-for-profit association, using their facilities for meetings, events and occasionally conducting interviews and making use of oral testimonies towards collectively producing cultural works such as theatrical plays, short movies etc.

> "We have presented our work at the XXX Cultural Foundation. At the same time, they have provided us with the camera, the hard drives, the audio recorder, etc. That's it. It has ceded to us, it's not our property, it's ceded to us. That's why we did something there […] In case we need something, let's say a graphic designer to help us with a publication or covering printing expenses, we just call them (the non-for-profit association), we send them the invoices and they cover it from the XXX Cultural Foundation". (Kallithea OHG)

Moving to collaborations developed between OHGs and actors from the civic society and social movements, they mostly comprise of the organization of common events around thematic

[1] Non-for-profit private organization that works on artistic interventions and participatory methods, anonymised here for privacy reasons

areas and historical periods that can trigger discussions on contemporary socio-political issues, such as the refugees who arrived in Greece from Asia Minor in the 1920s. The inherent interest of oral history on issues of a wide range of aspects concerning the everyday life (labour, housing, gender relations, cultural activities) is also brought up as a factor that enables relevant connections. Concerning prefigurative social movements, OHGs have been invited to present their work in squats and self-organised social centers with references to the Left. One of the groups is based in such a space, sharing it with local political and cultural groups and participating in the collective processes over its administration.

> "We are an informal group that operates within the framework of the Labour Club of Nea Ionia. We participate with representatives in the assemblies, take over a share of the common responsibilities for the space, contributing to funding, cleaning etc. Nevertheless, we have autonomy, and we organise our own events there". (Nea Ionia OHG)

Apart from political spaces, OHGs have also participated in events and have shared their archives with urban and environmental movements, especially regarding struggles over public, open and green spaces in the neighbourhoods they are located in. Additionally, OHGs, especially those that have looked into the civil war and dictatorship periods, have developed collaborations with associations of imprisoned and exiled people of these periods. These include, apart from the provision of oral testimonies, the provision of artefacts, photographs and other objects that relate to their imprisonment and exile, along with the common organisation of events and exhibitions in former prisons.

> "We had some items lent to us by relatives of former prisoners or by the prisoners themselves and we were able to display them. And we also had in one room a series of paintings made by an artist who in the 80s he was teaching painting to prisoners, so these paintings were actually his, not of prisoners, but they were inspired by the space". (Eptapyrgio OHG)

Another common pool of actors with which OHGs work with comprises the cultural associations, which operate as venues for people of same geographical origins and they operate either in metropolitan areas or the areas of reference themselves. Modes of collaboration include both the presentation of oral testimonies that are related with these areas and the direct support of OHGs through direct, yet informal, funding.

> "We addressed all the cultural associations on the island. Our tactic was that we needed to find money to cover expenses and some other things that might come up. So, we approached them asking for 50 euros from each association and saying that this is very good development for the area and if you want your members can come and attend our work etc. [...] This year, for example, in the summer, we will be doing activities with cultural associations. They told us that they will provide us with the cameras and editors so that we can take the oral testimonies and then together we will make a joint video with testimonies which is about the history of the village and the dreams of the inhabitants for the future. And somehow this will be presented at the same time throughout the exhibition in the village, which is very good promotion for the group and in general we like very much that we have clubs coming to us". (Chios OHG)

Apart from the collective actors already mentioned, OHGs seek for support and work with both individual and other sets actors towards disseminating their work and activities. As for the first part, support comprises of volunteer work provided through OHG members' interpersonal networks, regarding specific tasks that require skillsets that are not existent within OHGs such as graphic design and language proof reading. Moreover, OHGs often resort for financial support, mostly through in-person, crowdfunding events, to a broader circle of people who know and support their work.

> "Then there was graphic design work to be done. My daughter happens to know how to do that. We have friends who help us in this way. She did the artwork for us. It is common, when you need something, the first people you turn to are those from your friendly environment. That's who we will turn to" (Chalandri OHG).

> "We also needed to raise money. We held a social event, we held several times, two or three times at least, these types of events and we raised some money to buy what we needed and whatever came up. Small things, small expenses, not a huge amount, but still important for us in order to run things". (Ilioupoli OHG)

Finally, concerning dissemination through digital means, OHGs are struggling with catching-up with the digitalisation of their archives and the lack of resources towards creating and maintaining a platform through which they could - either independently or collectively - openly share their work. Lacking access to resources that could enable the creation of such a digital or hybrid structure, OHGs are considering options towards collaborating with institutional actors that both have the resources or the capacity to host and render accessible their archives and can secure the use and sharing of the archives according to the organisational and ethical principles under which OHGs operate (e.g., securing the non-commercial use of the archives through relevant creative commons licences). Such actors include the National Library of Greece, the General State Archives, university and municipal libraries.

> "We, as a group, are very positive to find a public institution (i.e. to store the archives), so in our discussions it is very clear that we could go with either the General State Archives which is the most established institution responsible for the collection of archival material, or the National Library" (Nea Ionia OHG)

> "It would really be ideal to have a platform, and we insist on an institutional body, the most appropriate one being the National Library. It would be nice that every town, every village should have its archive, its platform and all these should be connected to the great platform of the National Library. To have both the local and the broader under one institutional body. Simple things that are done elsewhere. The National Library of England did that with oral history testimonies. The same has happened in several occasions also in the United States" (Chalandri OHG).

Currently, in the lack of a relevant platform, OHGs store their archives in hard drives for which specific members are rendered responsible. Access remains open upon request, nevertheless physical presence is required for individual access. Additionally, apart from archive sharing practices through collaborations that were described earlier (including participation in events through talks and presentations, historical walks etc.), OHGs are regularly organising both individually and collectively (through the Oral History Festival which is organised by the coordinating body of the OHGs every two years) through which they disseminate their findings, mainly targeting local communities and the people who provided the oral testimonies. For OHG members, rendering the archives known and accessible to the communities which they both concern and derive from is of essential importance. This 'return' of the archive to the communities is brought out as both a recognition of their role in archive creation and a practice that can empower them and transform local dynamics and social relationships.

> "The main intention of the groups is to collect the history of the community. Of any community. And most importantly we want this history to be returned to the community" (Athens OHG)

> "One of our main goals is to render the island visible and to show the rich tradition that the island has. We have so many people who are descendants of refugees from Asia Minor, so that was an additional reason for the island to be known and to be known, because I think it is important for every local community that there is a reciprocation that comes

through recognition and respect. It raises the self-esteem of everyone who lives here [...] I think we have prioritised older people. I think we're giving them joy. I mean some people (i.e. who provided oral testimonies), especially at the first event we did, where we invited them and there wasn't a specific theme, we presented the first fifteen we did, but the people who came were also very moved. They brought their family, they were happy, we gave them each a rose, a thank you card, so I think it's very important an age group that's a bit isolated in some ways or people may feel they have nothing to contribute anymore, maybe beyond their family. They were at least honoured in that way. And I think that's very important. That is, their dignity was also boosted, their self-confidence, their morale, without meaning that it was consciously lowered. But certainly, this weakness that the years bring us affects mood and psyche, so it helps them to feel better" (Chios OHG).

6.2. Contemporary Social History Archives (ASKI)

Accessibility (Output - 3rd level)

Public actors	Third Sector/ Civic society/ other commons	Market
Universities (In Greece and abroad): Lectures, seminars, provision of access to archives, scientific publications, hosting foreign students	Niarchos Foundation: co-design and implementation of projects (e.g. archives for the history of Albanian migrants)	Media: participation in TV and radio shows
Schools: seminars organised with the Social and Cultural Affairs Welfare Foundation (KIKPE)	ASKI's Friends Association: co-organisation of seminars and events	
Other archives (General State Archives/ Parliament's library/ Hellenic Archival Society: Provision of access to archives, co-creation of projects	Migrants' Forum: Public talks and presentations, historical walks	
Political Party foundations (e.g., Rosa Luxemburg Stiftung): Co-creation of research projects	Informal social movements and civic society organisations: historical walks	
French School of Athens: Co-creation of research projects	Broader public: seminars, podcasts and social media, History Festival	
Autonomy/ Financial sustainability (Inputs - 2nd level)		

Public actors	Third Sector/ Civic society/ other commons	Market
SYRIZA political party: Financial support, provision of permanent space	ASKI's Friends Association: Financial support	
Ministries (of Culture, Development and Investments, Education): Direct and indirect funding	Broader public: Financial support through paid seminars, participation in events with entrance fees	
Universities and research centres: Co-participation in EU funded research projects	Interpersonal networks: undertaking of technical tasks mostly associated with dissemination activities	
Municipalities: Funding for the design and implementation of research projects		
Other archives (General State Archives/ Parliament's library/ Hellenic Archival Society: knowledge exchange		

Table 2: Relations and collaborations of ASKI with broader actors

ASKI's partaking in broader networks is affected by i) it's legal form that, contrary to the case of OHGs, enables the development of stable collaborations and the receiving of support, especially by institutional actors, ii) the scientific "legitimization" and strong academic foundations of the organization and the ties of its members with academic and research institutions, iii) the increasing interest in the domain of public history, followed by attempts to reach broader, non-specialised crowds and iv) the pursue to catch-up with digitalisation trends and to render their archives digital and enable remote, online access to them. As mentioned earlier, part of ASKI's budget and the provision of resources – especially concerning operational and storage spaces – comes from the SYRIZA political party. Until the crisis period, party funding, along with state funding through the Ministries of Culture and the Ministry of Education were sufficient towards covering the running costs for ASKI.

Nevertheless, both the cutting down in state support and the pursuit for financial autonomy, led ASKI to seek for alternative sources of funding. Building on that, a substantial part of ASKI's collaborations are developed in the frame of research programs with state actors and Greek or international research and academic institutions. Currently, ASKI partake in three consortia in the frame of Greek and international research projects towards covering labour costs of project-based workers while also directing funds to the digitalisation of their archive. At the same time, ASKI has also developed collaborations with local authorities through

subcontracting towards i) conducting historical studies which are of interest for the local authorities and ii) assisting the latter with issues related to creating, organizing and maintaining archives.

> "We are participating in a European project as partners with 5 other institutions and led by the Autonomous University of Barcelona, which is about the participation of women in resistance movements in Spain, Italy, Poland and Greece. Overall, we are involved in three projects like that and we are getting funding, part of which is directed towards digitalising our archive, something that has been outsourced, we don't do it ourselves. It also covers for the salaries of employees on fixed-term contracts […] There are also some collaborations with local governments, with municipalities in the context of subcontracting, where they use our expertise in archives, in organizing archives, in classification, in some other actions, writing historical albums, historical texts etc. So, with those we supplement the amount we need for our annual budget".

As mentioned earlier, ASKI, due to its strong scientific foundations and reputation, maintains stable, long-term collaborations with institutional archives such as the General State Archives, the Greek Parliament's Library, the Greek Archival Company and the Hellenic Literary and Historical Archive, mostly around archive and knowledge exchange. Furthermore, the strong ties between ASKI and universities is not limited in common participation in research projects but also expands in the field of educational activities. These include the common organisation of lectures and seminars and the participation of ASKI members in postgraduate courses through presentations which are also intended to reach out broader audiences beyond enrolled students.

> "Numerous ASKI members are working closely with universities and have been part of postgraduate programmes at Panteion University, at the Department of Political Science at the University of Athens, at the Historical Archaeology Department. But again, these seminars had an open participation logic, they weren't solely addressing graduate students. They are also organised in a logic of equity in speech and expression, not a logic that there is a leading expert, and everyone is listening to them without participating. A character which is more participatory and open"

Finally, concerning institutional actors, ASKI has also worked with teachers through the organization of seminars which are co-organised with the Social and Cultural Affairs Welfare Foundation, the French School of Athens and political party institutions such as Rosa Luxemburg Stiftung. Collaborations with the latter involve the exchange of archives and the common organisation of public events.

As for ASKI collaboration with the third sector and market actors, it is limited to the acquisition of funding from the Stavros Niarchos Foundation towards creating an archive concerning Albanian migration to Greece. Moving to civic society and social movements, a key entity which enables the activity of ASKI in various ways is the Association of ASKI friends. This association constitutes an attempt to create a broader community around ASKI which undertakes the twofold role of i) supporting the long-term sustainability of ASKI through the expansion of its activities and the acquisition of funding and ii) assisting with the dissemination of ASKI's work beyond specialised audiences and further empower its intervention in the field of public history. In this frame, the members of the association pay an annual membership that also included subscription to ASKI's yearly journal, free provision of selected publications, as well as small gifts. This opening up to crowdfunding techniques, also mediated through the Association of ASKI friends recently expanded to the organisation of a round of seminars conducted by ASKI members, addressed to broader, non-specialised audiences.

> "This (i.e. the seminars) was quite successful, we had about 170 people who signed up to participate in the seminars, about 250 people in total (i.e. including members of the Association of ASKI Friends), who are not necessarily coming from an academic background in history or political science, they were also researchers from completely unrelated fields such as civil engineering, non-academics, people from education etc. It's also people who have seen us, have listened to our radio show, know about us from social media and are interested in history, the Left, social movements etc."

Additionally, ASKI have collaborated with civic society groups and social movements, mostly through contributing to events by organising public talks, presentations and historical walks. These collaborations are not restricted to the presentation and narration of historical events but are on most occasions related with contemporary socio-political issues and undertake an empowering role.

> "We organised a walk in Athens with a group named XXX, comprising of which some girls who had started an initiative to take testimonies concerning the history of the LGBTQ community in Greece. We approached them because we liked their work, and we said we have an idea to do a walk because it was important. It doesn't have to be a formal or institutional group in order to work with someone, we have several such synergies. We are also working with the Immigrants' Forum. In general, we do various such collaborations from time to time, not permanent and not concerning specific thematic areas, mostly action-oriented things"

Concerning non-collective actors, ASKI members often resort to former collaborators, colleagues and supporters for specialised tasks, especially related to the dissemination of their work. This support undertakes the form of volunteer labour which is further enhanced by more formal channels, such as internship programs.

> "We have two or three friends who are graphic designers and help us through designing, for example, a poster for a conference or an important event. We've collaborated in the past, so they've taken something from us. So, if you ask them to do something small for free they'll do it. This is a circle of people who support us regularly through volunteer work and this circle is narrower than the one of the Association of ASKI friends. Also, there is of course the organised internship and volunteer work through various internship programs".

Finally, as for the dissemination and communication of their work and activities, ASKI is maintaining social media profiles in relevant platforms, while hosting a weekly radio show in which they present and discuss their work. Through these means, ASKI aspires to further contribute to the production of public history and the engagement of broader, non-specialised audiences. Through this engagement with public history, along with the possibilities provided by the Association of ASKI friends or a change of legal status that would enable further activities that could provide additional income, ASKI members also explore ways to support their future financial sustainability and independence.

> "The advantage of our legal form (i.e. civil non-profit company) is that we are excluded from VAT obligations. On the contrary, the Association of ASKI friends is not excluded from VAT but is allowed to organise activities, which we could also under, for example, a cooperative or a social enterprise status. We could create a digital app or do historical walks for a small fee. That can't be done now. We would like to be able to have some limited commercial activities that could generate revenue and enable us to be more viable in economic terms".

6.3. The Museum of Political Exiles of Ai Stratis (MPEAS)

<table>
<tr><th colspan="3">Accessibility (Output - 3rd level)</th></tr>
<tr><th>Public actors</th><th>Third Sector/ Civic society/ other commons</th><th>Market</th></tr>
<tr><td>Ministries and the Presidency of the Hellenic Republic: co-organisation of events, access to resources</td><td>Broader public: co-creation of poetry nights, book presentations, lectures, concerts</td><td>Media: provision of archives for movies and documentaries</td></tr>
<tr><td>Universities and schools: co-organised visits to the museum, access to the archives for research purposes, co-organisation of workshops</td><td>Other Archives and related NGOs: co-creation of events</td><td>Benaki Museim: co-creation of events, presentations</td></tr>
<tr><td>Municipality: Athens Museum Network</td><td>Other Museums: networking with other Museums of Exiles in Greece and beyond</td><td>Private collectors: co-creation of exhibitions and events</td></tr>
<tr><th colspan="3">Autonomy/ Financial sustainability (Inputs - 2nd level)</th></tr>
<tr><th>Public actors</th><th>Third Sector/ Civic society/ other commons</th><th>Market</th></tr>
<tr><td>Ministries and the Presidency of the Hellenic Republic: auspices and sponsorships, cover of recurring costs of the museum (energy costs)</td><td>Membership: fees, donations, volunteer entry admissions</td><td rowspan="3"></td></tr>
<tr><td rowspan="2">ERDF: participation in EU funding projects (digitalisation of archives)</td><td>ASKI: sharing of rights to archives</td></tr>
<tr><td>NGOs: funding for research</td></tr>
</table>

Table 3: Relations and collaborations of MPEAS with broader actors

To start with MPEAS' access to the or their building in which it is still situated, was facilitated by the Ministry of Culture which in the early 1980's released a call for the concession of unused, conserved buildings in central Athens towards covering the needs of initiatives of non-for-profit cultural and collective memory initiatives and entities. Similarly to the OHGs and ASKI, collaborations with public bodies are mainly developed towards securing access to resources. Apart from the provision of the hosting building, national funding programs enabled the recording of MPEAS' archive and collection, while energy costs are covered by the Ministry of Culture because of the hosting of the Ephorate of Contemporary and Modern Monuments in

the premises of the museum. Moreover, through the acquisition of financial support from EU funded projects, MPEAS has managed to proceed with the digitalisation of a substantial part of its collection and archives.

At the same time, collaborations with public and institutional actors also include the participation in a network of museums and cultural centres that operate in the historical centre of Athens, also supported by the Municipality of Athens. Moreover, given the significant overlap concerning aims and goals, MPEAS has developed stable collaborations with ASKI, involving the exchange and sharing of archives, as well as the organisation of common public event. Building on that, it lies within MPEAS' vision that this collaboration could expand to include shared facilities in which archives and collections can be stored and rendered accessible to the public.

> "We have a good cooperation with ASKI. We have organised joint events and joint presentations and the interesting thing is that we share part of our archival materials. An example is the Nikos Margaris Archive. The photographic archive of Nikos Margaris was handed over jointly to us and ASKI. All the original material was handed over to the ASKI and with the obligation for us to have a complete copy and we have a joint right to use the archive. The peculiarity that we have there is that ASKI is an archival institution. It would be ideal if there were a large space for joint storage preservation of our archives and another space for objects and artefacts. In our course through these years, we have handed over parts of our collection for display to other institutions, such as the exhibition that they had done with artefacts made by prisoners during the dictatorship period". (MPEAS)

Nevertheless, alike the other two initiatives under study, MPEAS is struggling towards securing its financial sustainability. This condition is further undermined by the selected legal form, due to which MPEAS cannot raise revenues from its facilities or organised activities, while at the same time they cannot be direct recipients of state funding.

> "We made a proposal in the past, because the building also has a courtyard that could be used as a café and generate revenue. The Department of Antiquities refuses to give us any concession on it [...] Unfortunately there is another problem which is that due to the fact that we don't have stable staff and stable revenues, we cannot get direct funding by the Ministry of Culture. There has to be another body that will get the funding and then provide part of it to us [...] Because of the non-profit nature we do not take a ticket but only voluntary contributions. This makes some sense in preserving our character and logic. But what does this signify on the other side? It signifies that these finances are very low. That is a problem. At the same time the state puts a tax on us and we pay 600, 500 euros as if we are someone who makes a profit or does commercial operations while we are not doing any of those things". (MPEAS)

Given the aforementioned issues, MPEAS is largely relying upon its extended community and audience for the provision of both financial support and volunteer labour. The first includes membership fees, donations and volunteer entry admissions, while the latter concerns the organisation of events in the museum's premises and beyond. Nevertheless, as in the case of most museums, especially small ones, the pandemic period posed challenges due to the mobility restrictions and the subsequent pause of on-site visits. In the case of MPEAS, the impact of the pandemic was strong and its activities have been limited even in the period that followed the withdrawal of mobility restrictions.

> "Unfortunately, there was a very big gap because of the pandemic, the museum's operation and additional activities were paused and, actually, we haven't recovered from it yet. Currently, the museum is running with student visits and some guided tours". (MPEAS)

Finally, concerning dissemination activities, MPEAS has managed to both render its collection and archives available and usable by non-specialised actors and organise events that encompass activities that are complementary to the granting access to its materials. The first include its participation in documentaries and movies that are exploring the historical periods which MPEAS is interested in, along with theatrical plays. The second includes events in its facilities with recitation of poems written by exiles, concerts, book exhibitions and presentations.

7. General remarks

As seen through the three case studies, the networks that grassroots archives and museums build can be seen in two distinct levels; the networks that are build to support their autonomy and financial sustainability (inputs, second level) and the networks that help them disseminate their work, reach out to different audiences and make their works accessible to others (outputs, third level). The networks build in these two levels are somehow dictated by the decisions made in the first level (that of governance and management), as the ways grassroots GLAMs are governed (bottom-up, horizontal decision making system, legal or no legal form etc) enables them or disables to do certain things and overall their mode of governance produces a collective political subjectivity, that have certain repercussions in the ways they select their collaborators and the ways they build ties with them.

Moreover, we see that in the level of securing their financial sustainability, the informal set up of the OHG (entities with no legal status) make them rely a lot on informal relations with other urban commons, informal political or neighbourhood groups, in order to find the adequate resources for their function. These resources mainly include the necessary equipment for their function, as well as spaces to gather, meet-up and exhibit their works. The latter (spaces) is also secured many times through their connections with public bodies that have an interest in their work (either the local municipalities or universities that do archival research). Again, most of the times this is done informally, or through personal guarantees from members of the OHG. The informal status of their operation puts all connections in an informal manner that has a trust base on the collective political subjectivity of the OHG. Moreover, in the OHG we also find that volunteer labour is the main driving force of their existence. The members of each OHG bring not only their free labour in their group, but also, using their interpersonal networks, they may bring more resources from individual people that are willing to devote their time and effort to the OHG, without being a member. Again, the collective ethos and subjectivity of the OHG, along with a collective desire to bring to the fore the local history from below, is something that unites members of the OHG and brings additional resources from their personal support networks.

On the other hand, the ASKI and MPEAS cases show a somewhat different picture. As both have a legal status and (especially ASKI) a number of permanent employees, their networks concerning their financial sustainability are mainly based on connections with public bodies, such as municipalities, Ministries, and universities, but also with certain political parties of the Left. Through these networks they usually acquire funding to do new projects (e.g. digitalisation of the archives). Their legal status (not-for-profit entities) makes them also eligible for funding that comes through specific funding instruments (the ERDF-EC, or national research funding schemes). As such, their networks with other third sector entities or informal groups are limited to their close range of friends and supporters (ASKI's friends association, the small membership of MPEAS etc). Moreover, none of the three cases have strong networks with market entities, concerning issues for their financial sustainability.

However, we have to note that the financial needs of the OHG are much lower than the relevant needs of the other two cases, as the legal status of ASKI and MPEAS and the fact that they have temporary employees, bears more operational costs.

Turning to the networks found in the third level of the outreach activities of the three case studies we see a more homogenous picture, as all cases rely a lot on either formal connection with public bodies, or on connections with formal third sector entities (NGOs) or informal groups of people. All of them provide free access, under certain agreements, to their archives to researchers from universities and the public (especially through the digitalisation of their

material), which can be found in their websites. All of them engage in co-creation projects and in the co-organisation of events and exhibitions with municipalities, universities and residents' groups etc. A difference here is again made by the legal status of ASKI and MPEAs that enables them to engage in the co-organisation of events with more prestigious entities, like the Presidency of the Hellenic Republic or the National and Parliamentary Libraries. Moreover, it is interesting that most of the interviewed members of the OHG believe that their overall digital repository should be under the National Library, a public Institution. This intension reflects their desire for a further legitimisation of their work, similarly to the case of relevant initiatives in the UK, whose archives have been made available through the British Library. Apart from legitimisation, such a collaboration could secure stable access to resources, while addressing the major challenge towards the broader dissemination of the archives, namely digitalisation.

Overall, we need to mention the importance of the link between the legal status of a grassroot archive/museum and their financial and funding networks. A legal status (either NGO or a not-for-profit etc) gives to the GLAM an institutional visibility and paves the way to receive funding from public bodies and be less dependent on its supporters and members. On the other hand, GLAMs with no legal status may perform in a more independent, flexible and horizontal way (concerning decision-making), but they cannot be eligible for formal funding, and as such they need to rely a lot on informal networks.

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