Imag(in)ing the Everyday: Using camera phones to access everyday meanings of archaeological monuments

Konstantinos Arvanitis
Department of Museum Studies, University of Leicester, UK

http://www.le.ac.uk/museumstudies/ka43/kostas/index.htm

Abstract (EN)

Museums see mobile media, such as PDAs or mobile phones, usually, as means for providing location-based and context-aware information for cultural tourism. In this respect, mobile media become the portable receivers and disseminators of museum knowledge, available to users who wish to enhance their outdoor cultural experiences.

This paper moves beyond this approach. It looks at mobile media, in particular mobile phones, as an opportunity for museums to access everyday life and the knowledge produced in it. In the case of archaeological monuments located in cities, the knowledge of the everyday is associated to the meanings that the monuments acquire by 'standing on the way' of people's everyday lives. As parts of people's daily scenery, archaeological monuments are 'exposed' to constant and ephemeral appropriations that reveal the way monuments are perceived and used in everyday life. In this context, mobile phones may provide a means to access and reveal those everyday meanings that usually go unnoticed.

Additionally, the paper presents results from relevant empirical research. In summer 2004, ten students in Thessaloniki, Greece, were invited to use their own camera phones to capture and communicate through MMS (Multimedia Messaging Service) the way they perceive and use three archaeological monuments of the city. The same group of people, also, participated in follow-up focus groups. The analysis of the collected material suggests that although the camera phones allowed users to capture and communicate daily 'images' of the monuments, the limitations in the text and the quality of the images of MMS messages triggered an 'imagination' of the everyday among the rest of

the participants, i.e. further or alternative interpretations of monuments to the ones intended by the senders.

Keywords: Mobile phones, camera phones, MMS, archaeological monuments, everyday life

Zusammenfassung (DE)

Normalerweise sehen Museen mobile Medien, wie z.B. PDAs oder Mobiltelefone, als Mittel, lokale und kontextbezogene Informationen für den Kulturtourismus zu liefern. Auf diese Weise werden mobile Medien tragbare Empfänger und Verbreiter von Museums Informationen, die dem Benutzer erlauben seine kulturelle Erfahrung im öffentlichen Raum zu erweitern.

Dieser Vortrag geht über diese Auffassung mobiler Medien hinaus. Er analysiert die Möglichkeiten des Museums, über mobile Medien, vor allem Mobiltelefone, Zugang zu dem im Alltag generierten Wissen zu bekommen. Das im Alltag der Menschen entstehende Wissen über archäologischen Monumenten in Städten, ist assoziiert mit der Bedeutung die die Monumente dadurch bekommen, dass sie den Menschen so zu sagen „im Weg stehen". Als Teil des Alltagslebens, sind archäologische Monumente ständigen und kurzlebigen Bedeutungsaneignungen „ausgesetzt", die die Art und Weise wie Monumente im Alltag verstanden werden, hervorbringen. In diesem Kontext, könnten Mobiltelefone ein Medium sein, diese sonst unsichtbar bleibenden Bedeutungen, erfassen.

Im weiteren, präsentiert der Vortrag relevante Ergebnisse wissenschaftlicher Forschung, die im Sommer 2004 durchgeführt wurde. Dabei waren zehn Studenten aus Thessaloniki, Griechenland eingeladen mit ihren, mit Kameras ausgerüsteten Mobiltelefonen, drei archäologische Monumente der Stadt zu dokumentieren und über MMS (Multimedia Messaging Service) darüber zu kommunizieren. Dieselbe Gruppe von Studenten waren auch Teilnehmer in anschließenden Fokusgruppen. Die Analyse des gesammelten Forschungsmaterials deutet darauf hin, dass die Kameratelefone den Testpersonen zwar erlaubten alltägliche „Bilder" von den Monumenten zu erfassen und zu kommunizieren, die Begrenztheit des Texts und die Qualität der Bilder der MMS-Messages, führten bei den restlichen Teilnehmern aber zu einer „Fantasie" des Alltäglichen. In anderen Worten, es führte zu weiteren oder alternativen Interpretationen der Monumente im Vergleich zu den von der Person intendierten.

Schlüsselwörter (DE): Mobiltelefone, Kameratelefone, MMS, archäologische

Monumente, Alltagsleben

Résumé (FR)

Habituellement, les musées considèrent les médias mobiles, tels que PDAs ou mobil phones, en tant que moyens pour l'information endroit-basée et contexte-avertie information pour le tourisme culturel. À cet égard, les médias mobiles deviennent les récepteurs et les disséminateurs portatifs de la connaissance de musée, disponibles aux utilisateurs qui souhaitent augmenter leurs expériences culturelles extérieures. Cet article se déplace au delà de cette approche. Il regarde des médias mobiles, en particulier mobil phones, comme occasion pour des musées d'accéder à la vie quotidienne et à la connaissance produite dans lui. Dans le cas des monuments archéologiques situés dans les villes, la connaissance du journalier est associée aux significations que les monuments acquièrent au 'stand sur le chemin 'des vies journalières des personnes. Comme parties du paysage quotidien des personnes, des monuments archéologiques 'sont exposés 'à constant et des crédits éphémères qui indiquent les monuments de manière sont perçus et employés dans la vie quotidienne. Dans ce contexte, les mobil phones peuvent fournir des moyens d'accéder et indiquer à ces significations journalières qui passent habituellement inaperçues. En plus, l'article présente les résultats de la recherche empirique appropriée. Pendant la été 2004, dix étudiants in Thessaloniki, Grèce, ont été invités à utiliser leurs propres téléphones d'appareil-photo pour capturer et communiquer par MMS (service "messages" de multimédia) la manière qu'ils perçoivent et emploient trois monuments archéologiques de la ville. Egalement, le même groupe de personnes, a participé aux groupes de foyer de suivi. L'analyse du matériel rassemblé suggère que bien que les téléphones d'appareil-photo permis des utilisateurs pour capturer et communiquer quotidiennement les 'images des monuments, des limitations dans le texte et de la qualité des images des messages de MMS aient déclenché 'une imagination 'du journalier parmi le reste des participants, c.-à-d. plus loin ou les interprétations alternatives des monuments à ceux ont prévu par les expéditeurs.

Mots clés: mobil phones, appareil-photo téléphone, MMS, monuments archéologiques, vie quotidienne

‘I am looking at eyes that looked at the Emperor’

(Barthes, 1982:3)

I. Introduction. Mobile media and museum knowledge

Museums have been trying through various means to ‘enter’ everyday life and create ‘museum niches’ in everyday settings (Arvanitis, 2005). This effort is part of a ‘revitalization of the idea of the museum, a diffusion of the museum beyond its walls, a ‘museumification’ of ever more aspects of culture, and a claiming of the museum by ever more sectors of society’ (Macdonald & Fyfe, 1996:2). Apart from mainly outreach initiatives and outdoor exhibitions, this expansion of museums into everyday environments can be detected in the dissemination of museum knowledge beyond the museum premises, which has been foreseen long ago, by authors such as Walter Benjamin (1973), in his Age of Mechanical Reproduction, or Andre Malraux (1967) in his Imaginary museum.

In this framework, also applications of mobile technology function as vehicles of museums to access the everyday, to extent their presence in other spaces and times (at home, at work, or in leisure) and to be accessed by remote visitors. Mobile context-aware technology and GPS have already been used in experimental level in cultural tourism to enable personalized learning: The ‘Guide System’, an electronic tourist guide, has combined mobile computing technologies with a wireless infrastructure to provide city visitors with information suited to both their personal and environmental contexts (Cheverst, et al., 2000). Other projects, such as the ‘George Square’ system (Brown, et al. 2005), have studied the potential of handheld

computers to support co-visiting among city visitors sharing their visit with others at a distance. Furthermore, projects such as the 'Citywide project' have tried to merge physical and digital space: Using mobile media and while moving through physical space, users are provided with digital experiences that involve detecting, revealing and experiencing events that take place in a parallel 3D virtual world (Izadi, et al. 2002). Apart from research-led projects, also commercial products such as m-ToGuide (http://www.motorolatele.com/MOTOnow/) and other location-based services (Eriksson, 2000) take advantage of mobile technology to deliver location-sensitive information.

The above and other similar projects (Wood, 2004) suggest that mobile media are seen mainly as portable receivers and disseminators of museum, or in general cultural, knowledge, available to users who wish to enhance their outdoor cultural experiences. In turn, the resident, the tourist or the city visitor is seen as a museum visitor outdoors and the city as a museum, a field of potential museological moments. As Bell (2002:13) points out, 'suddenly the museum is everywhere, or at least potentially everywhere'.

II. Mobile media and everyday knowledge

1. Everyday meanings of archaeological monuments

However, mobile media present museums with the opportunity not only to popularise and 'give away' museum knowledge to a remote public, but also, to access and 'collect' everyday knowledge. In the case of archaeological monuments located in cities, the knowledge of the everyday is associated to the meanings that the monuments acquire by 'standing on the way' of people's everyday lives. These monuments are mainly architectural ruins of antiquity that lie, where they were originally built: nowadays, this means that they lie in houses'

basements, or, they are part of the urban infrastructure, standing on streets, parks and pavements.

As parts of people's daily scenery, archaeological monuments are 'exposed' to constant and ephemeral appropriations that reveal the way monuments are perceived and used in everyday life. But, like everyday life, archaeological monuments in cityscapes are not unique and particular, but common and familiar. They are part of the repetitive structure of the daily life, as Henri Lefebvre would argue (1987:11). They are 'what we never see for a first time, but only see again' (Blanchot & Hanson, 1987:14). In other words, they are taken for granted and because of that they are difficult to be noticed as something out of the ordinary (Highmore, 2002:8; Attfield, 2000:50,173). Consequently, the monuments continue their sociocultural history as all objects do (Appadurai, 1986) stimulating a range of interpretations, meanings and uses, which may be more related to the way everyday life operates, rather to the archaeological nature of the monuments. As Brian S. Osborne (2001:8) points out referring to national monuments, people's reaction to monuments often discloses more about the present than the past.

People may go beyond any 'official' view of the monuments and construct alternative meanings, defined by the day-by-day interaction with the monuments. To paraphrase Michel de Certeau (1988:104),

> 'these [monuments][1] make themselves available to diverse meanings given them by passers-by; they detach themselves from the places they were supposed to define and serve as imaginary meeting-points on itineraries which, as metaphors, they determine

for reasons that are foreign to their original value but may be recognized or not by passers-by'.

These meanings are influenced by the mixture of predictable and unpredictable situations and actions that take place in daily life. So, they are dynamic, constant and highly conditioned by the fragile and ephemeral everyday. Although ephemeral and personal, these meanings are not less important than the 'official' archaeological interpretation of the monuments, often presented in museums or related institutions. The everyday meanings constitute the way the monuments are understood in the day by day life, which eventually has a direct impact on the way monuments are used.

However, grasping the everyday is far from simple. In some ways everyday life is an archive 'yet to be catalogued', or an archive that might also resist cataloguing (Highmore, 2002:161). 'The everyday is invisible, but ever present' (Miller & McHoul, 1998:9) and so it escapes acknowledgment and understanding. As Hegel used to say, 'the familiar is not necessarily the known'. In the same way, the material culture of the everyday is a largely unknown territory because there is nothing extraordinary about it (Attfield, 2000:173).

2. Mobile media and the Everyday

In this context, mobile media, in particular mobile phones, which are increasingly becoming an everyday technology, may provide a means to access and reveal those everyday meanings that usually go unnoticed. Mobile media, in particular mobile phones, are 'compatible' with the everyday: mobile phones follow their users in their everyday life. They are personal, portable and pedestrian (Ito, Okabe & Matsuda 2005), as everyday life is. Mobile phones participate in the routine of daily life (Townsend, 2000:85) and can enable an almost intuitive

record of daily situations. As it has already been stressed, mobile technology has been used as vehicle of knowledge and information from the museum into everyday life. However, mobile technology can be used, also, in the opposite way: to bring the everyday into the museum. In our case, to make visible the knowledge and understandings that happen in the space and time of everyday life regarding archaeological monuments. In accessing a range of understandings that belong to the ephemerality of everyday life, yet convey deeper understandings and perceptions of material culture, museums may enhance the way they interpret material culture and provide richer experiences to both on-site and remote visitors.

It is no surprise that mobile media have, already, been used for such purposes. Urban Tapestries (http://urbantapestries.net/), for example, aimed to design a device that can allow people to annotate the urban spaces that they inhabit and pass through every day. It has developed an interactive location-based wireless application that enable users to access and publish multimedia content related to specific locations in cities (such as local historical information, personal memories, pictures, short movies and sounds). Through this application, people share experience and knowledge, and leave ephemeral traces of their presence in the geography of the city (West, 2005:2). These ideas of the 'information capture' (Brown et al., 2000) and 'annotation' gain more attention every day and are the basis of recent and current mobile media projects (Shabajee, et al. 2002; www.annotatespace.com). As Brown (2000) points out, in the future we will be able not only to capture but also store life's experiences.

III. Camera phones and three archaeological monuments in Greece

Towards the exploration of the potential of mobile media to access, reveal and communicate the knowledge of the everyday, qualitative investigation involving camera phones was undertaken in Thessaloniki, Greece in summer 2004. The aim of this empirical study was to investigate to what extent camera phones can be used to access and reveal meanings that people make about archaeological monuments in their everyday life.[2]

Ten university students in Thessaloniki, Greece, were invited to use their own camera phones for a period of 15 days, to capture and communicate through MMS (Multimedia Messaging Service) the way they perceive and use three archaeological monuments of the city. The three ancient monuments of the research were: the arch of Galerius, the ruins of the Galerius' complex on Dimitrios Gounaris street and the ruins of the city walls on Melenikou street (see figures 1-3). The participants would, then, send the MMS messages to the researcher's camera phone.

Fig. 1: Arch of Galerius, Thessaloniki, Greece (ca 304 AC).

Fig. 2: Ruins of Galerius' Complex on Dimitrios Gounaris St., Thessaloniki, Greece (ca 304 AC).

Fig. 3: Ruins of the city walls on Melenikou street, Thessaloniki, Greece

The particular monuments were chosen because they lie in open, public spaces, near the city centre and close to the university. Therefore, they were very likely to be part of the students' daily lives, routines and routes. The participants were sampled using the snowball method (Mason, 2002). This method offered the opportunity to secure the participation of users-owners of camera phones, which was important for the research purposes of this study. The

study focused on camera phones because of their popularity among the Greek population (Giaglis, 2004). They are, also, an increasingly affordable technology. Unlike other projects (Urban Tapestries, Annotate Space) that test custom-made mobile devices not yet widely available, this project used camera phones, owned by the participants. This was a crucial point in relation to the notion of everyday life, as discussed earlier: that a common technology is used by common people in ordinary situations, to capture and reveal common interpretations. This choice was also part of an effort to minimise as much as possible the conditioning of the participants' daily life and use of their phones because of their participation in a project. Additional measures were taken to imitate as much as possible the normality of the participants' daily life and minimize the feeling of taking part in an experiment that could potentially condition further the content and the process of creating the MMS messages: Although other studies have required a minimum of camera phone images by the participants (Sellen, et al. 2004:2) in this case participants were not asked to send any particular number of messages in specific days. Instead, they were encouraged to send MMS messages only when their everyday routes were bringing them close to the monuments. Also, any diary methods to log the use of MMS messages (common in other studies, e.g. Grinter & Elridge, 2003) were avoided. Instead focus groups interviews followed the initial study and functioned as de-briefing sessions.

The participants were encouraged to use both the image and the text option of the camera phone. This was important not just to explore the potential of camera phones to capture the participants' everyday meanings of the monuments, but, also, to increase the 'readability' of the phone message: The ambiguity of photographs in ethnographic research has been noted in relevant studies, such as of Emmison & Smith (2000:2-4): 'visual data should be thought

of not in terms of what the camera can record but of what the eye can see' or, of Pink (2001:23), 'the rupture between visibility and reality is significant for an ethnographic approach to the visual because it implies that reality cannot necessarily be observed visually'. Therefore, it was anticipated that the participants' textual comments would make easier the connection of the visual with the visible and allow a better 'reading' of what the participants see, say, or try to visualize through a camera phone image.

IV. Imag(in)ing everyday meanings of archaeological monuments

Analysis of the received MMS messages and the following focus groups discussion suggests two patterns in the participants' process of creating MMS messages regarding their everyday perceptions and uses of the archaeological monuments.

3. The image initiates the MMS message

According to the first pattern, the creation of the MMS is stimulated by the image of an event or a situation in the surrounding space of the archaeological monument. In this case, the MMS photo is the image of the particular event or situation that initiated the message, while the accompanying text provides the interpretation of the photo. The MMS photo itself is not usually self explanatory and the text provides the sender's interpretation of the photo and partly the intention of the photo and the scene it depicts. Therefore, in this case the link between photo and text is strong and each one supplement the other.

The following two MMS are examples of the first pattern:

MMS 1: Text:

'The fight for the rights is everywhere'

Fig. 4: MMS message (photo and [translated] text) by participant
(photo of the arch of Galerius, Thessaloniki, Greece)

MMS 1 (figure 4) pictures the arch of Galerius with a banner attached on the monument's protective fence. The banner is an advertisement of an anti-racial festival in Thessaloniki. In this case, the particular image of the monument and the banner stimulated the interest of the sender to capture it and provide an explanation of it. The MMS text provides the particular interpretation of the photographed scene and reveals the intention of the MMS message: to acknowledge this odd coexistence of the ephemeral banner and the permanent monument in everyday life. It is the MMS text that emphasizes that contradictory relation: it implies that the archaeological monument is not an appropriate place for a banner to be hanged, by pointing out that the 'the fight for the rights is *everywhere'*; in other words, even attached on an archaeological monument. This MMS presents, then, the monument as the background of an activity not directly related to the monument's archaeological nature, revealing the extent that the monument is interweaved in the everyday life of the city.

However, the intended message of the MMS was not understood initially by the rest of the participants, when they were presented with it during the focus groups:[3]

P1: Ok, guys, it's not something bad [laughs]

P3: But, (it is) on the antiquities!

P1: He [sic] didn't put it on the antiquities

P3: On the fence; If he [sic] could, he [sic] would have put it even on (the monument)

P1: Look, the arch is a focal point, so they found the best place to hang it up. Generally, there are many (banners) there.

P3: Yes, it is very ugly.

P1: Yes it is ugly, because it hides basically the archaeological site.

P3: It does not respect it as well.

The discussion on this MMS continued, but until this point the participants of the focus group completely ignored the text of the MMS. They only focused on speaking about the image. Although the sender of the message wanted to point out that the fight for rights may justify putting a banner on an archaeological monument, the above extract shows that the rest of the participants focused on the aesthetic aspect of having a banner on a monument, the disrespect this action shows to the value of the monument and the potential success of getting the banner's message across by placing it on a busy place. Even when the researcher pointed them to the MMS' text, the participants continued to discuss their own interpretations and points of view of the photographed scene.

	**MMS 2: Text:** 'Not tourist but worker'

Fig. 5: MMS message (photo and [translated] text) by participant
(photo next to the city walls on Melenikou street, Thessaloniki, Greece)

MMS 2 (figure 5) pictures a black young male holding a plastic sheet. The image was taken next to the city walls on Melenikou street (see figure 2). Again, in this MMS, the connection of the text to the image is necessary in order to understand both. However, also in this case, the participants of the focus group chose to ignore initially the text and focus on the image, which they commented on. And as in the previous MMS, the intention and interpretation of the MMS' sender was not immediately understood by the rest. Although, the sender wishes to point out that monuments are not just the terrain of tourists, but also of workers (in this case, a worker of an open market that uses the plastic sheet to lay down his goods) one of the participants 'saw' in the image a homeless person who was folding the sheet he uses to sleep at night. This interpretation, although misunderstands the intended message, yet shows another everyday reality in the space of the particular monument.

4. The image initiates the MMS message

In the second pattern of creating MMS, the content of the text is the stimulus for the MMS. This text is, though, basically a textual description of a pre-conceived image of an everyday scene that is worked in the mind of the sender before the camera phone imaging takes place.

In other words, the sender has beforehand in mind a particular image of the everyday that translates into text. Then, the MMS photo is taken and added to the message, in order to provide the contextual background of the intended text message. The photo can either be a self-explanatory and close depiction of the text, or a general background that just contextualises the text. In this case, the MMS photo is not crucial to understand the text, because the text itself is a description of a shared everyday image of the monument. The MMS photo just confirms the text.

The following two MMS are examples of the second pattern:

MMS 3: Text:

'Obviously someone is late'

Fig. 6: MMS message (photo and [translated] text) by participant
(photo of the arch of Galerius, Thessaloniki, Greece)

The image on MMS 3 (figure 6) shows a young female person standing next to the arch of Galerius in Thessaloniki using a mobile phone. On the eyes of the MMS' sender, this is a familiar image of someone waiting for her appointment next to the particular monument that is a popular meeting place for young people. The sender, also, interprets the use of the mobile phone in relation to this situation. By writing 'obviously someone is late', the sender assumes that the person on the photograph tries to communicate with the person that stood

her up. Or, it could, also, refer to the common use of mobile phones to communicate with others while waiting. The following extract is from the discussion of the MMS during the focus group:

P3: [laughs]
P1: What did you photograph here, the young girl?
P3: The everyday life at the arch, we give appointments. Someone is late, me! [laughs]
P1: It is something that you see every time you pass from there.
P2 {sender}: It is the main everyday image at the arch. And from my experience [laughs], I have been stood up a lot. That is why I said, I should depict it, to communicate this to others. Because, I have been many times in the situation of that girl with the mobile in hand.
P1: So, does she hold a mobile?
P2 {sender}: Yes,
P1: (sigh) she is stood up all right!

In this MMS, the text is sufficient to understand the meaning of the message. In the particular MMS, also, the photo is a good depiction of the intended text message: the photo is an effort to reconstruct the image of an everyday scene at the arch of Galerius that stimulated the MMS in the first place. In this particular case, the everyday image that the sender has in mind is also happening in the physical space of the monument. Therefore, the photo is an accurate image of the text message, rather than just a context of the message, as in MMS 4.

Also, although the particular detail of the young person holding the mobile phone is not clear from either the picture or the text, yet the intended message gets across: the participants saw in the photo what the sender had in mind: waiting at the arch for an appointment. The participants' comments were in line with the intended message. They identified easily both

the image and the text message without going off in any different interpretations of the MMS.

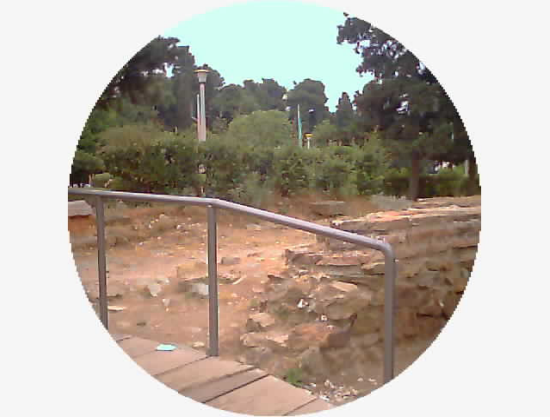	**MMS 4: Text:** 'During the winter to try to cross from the department to Melenikou street and to get wet like a duck. The hell with these ruins. We were stepping on the mud. And especially during exams that we had to photocopy the notes…Thank God they put a bridge and we cross them like humans'

Fig. 7: MMS message (photo and [translated] text) by participant
(photo of the remains of the city walls on Melenikou Street, Thessaloniki, Greece

MMS 4 (figure 7) shows part of the ruins of the ancient walls in Thessaloniki and a pedestrian bridge over them that leads to Melenikou street, where many photocopy shops are located. The text of the MMS tells a short story of a daily situation: the difficulty of students to walk across the ruins in rainy days when mud covered the place. The sender sees the installation of the bridge in relation to this daily problem. It interprets the bridge over the ruins as a 'dry' pathway for passers-by.

Also in this MMS, the text, without describing the image, is sufficient to understand the message. In this MMS, the text is a textual translation of an everyday image. The MMS

photo, in turn, is an image of the particular part of the ruins, where the bridge is installed and works more as a confirmation and contextualisation rather than reconstruction of the daily scene.

These two patterns show that MMS were used both to interpret an everyday scene or action and to express more repetitive understandings of the monuments. At the same time, they point, also, to the dual way that the participants – and indeed everyone – understand everyday life. In the first pattern (image initiates the message) events and scenes of the everyday would be interpreted instantly and captured in a MMS. These are the personalised and instant interpretations of scenes and events that take place in everyday life. They may be familiar to others, but they may not necessarily be others' own principal ways of understanding those events. As the examples and extracts of the first pattern MMS have shown, the intended message of those MMS was not clear among the focus groups participants. Instead, participants would add their own understandings of the MMS photos, even when the intended message would become clearer after reading the MMS text. This type of messages shows exactly the sender's and the participants' personalised views of common everyday scenes regarding the monuments. And because of the ambiguity that the personalised view of the everyday can create, those MMS messages stimulated long discussion and debate among the participants of the focus groups.

The messages of the second pattern (text initiates the message) show a collective view of the everyday. The messages of the second pattern *are* the everyday life of the monument, in other words, the principal ways that monuments relate to the particular group's daily experiences. They are the shared interpretations of everyday situations. For the senders, the

arch of Galerius is first of all a daily meeting place, and the city walls on Melenikou street a pathway towards the photocopy shops, where university course material is reproduced. These uses or perceptions of the monuments are not just another everyday interpretation of the monuments, but the basic and primary conceptualisation and imaging of the everydayness of the monuments among the students. This view of the monuments is repeated and confirmed routinely every time the students give an appointment at the arch or cross the walls. Because of this repetition, these monuments' perceptions seem very familiar to them. They are so attached to the monuments that people cannot separate them from any image they have of the monuments. That is why participants were able to identify the messages of those MMS very easily and no further interpretations were presented. The discussion would only focus on repeating and confirming the intended message that the MMS contained or clarifying the image, in case its quality was preventing from instant recognition of its details.

The above examples suggest that the everyday is a mixture of some more generally accepted and some more personally interpreted meanings. In other words, everyday life, although constructed collectively, is experienced individually, in a reflexive collaboration of people and through the commonly and silently accepted appropriation of the various rules that define the everyday. As far as this paper is concerned, camera phones offered the opportunity for both types of everyday meanings to be captured and communicated. The content of the MMS messages and the discussion about them have shown both very personal and collective ways the members of the group perceive and use the archaeological monuments. The MMS have, particularly, emphasized the individuality of everyday life, even among people who share the same everyday environment and are expected to have similar daily lives (the daily life of a student). It is true that the technical limitations of camera phones as well as the

conditions in which the MMS were created and sent (on the move) were limiting the expression of an everyday meaning, creating in some cases abstract and vague messages. However, it seems that particularly those ambiguous and obscure messages stimulated varied and different descriptions of everyday scenes and situations, in other words, more personalised interpretations of the everyday of archaeological monuments.

As a result, the MMS have not only offered everyday meanings of the archaeological monuments, but, also, disclosed the reality of multiple and diverse interpretations of shared daily interactions with the monuments. Furthermore, this everyday knowledge that usually goes unnoticed because of its familiarity, or underestimation, shows the appropriation of the monuments in the daily practices of the lived space. The MMS have acknowledged and communicated such everyday meanings of the monuments, offering potentially an enrichment of the traditional, archaeological knowledge that museums usually offer. In fact, such MMS messages are not just an enhancement of the museum's knowledge, but, also, a stimulus for the people's learning process: It is worthwhile mentioning that the participants of the study got interested in the monuments by going through the process of creating a MMS message, as the follow-up focus groups have indicated. Their 'look' through the camera phone have stimulated their interest on the actual monuments: i.e. the monuments as part of the city's cultural heritage. Sending a MMS has activated the 'gaze' of the monuments that is, usually, 'deactivated' in the route of everyday life.

IV. Conclusion

The paper has argued that mobile media are usually seen as portable receivers and disseminators of museum knowledge. However, they could, also, be used to capture the knowledge that is produced in everyday life. Focusing on meanings that archaeological monuments acquire in everyday life, the paper has presented results from an empirical investigation in Greece: the use of camera phones to access and communicate the way students make meaning of three archaeological monuments in Thessaloniki, Greece.

The analysis of the collected material suggests that by trying to present their everyday interpretations of the monuments, the senders of the MMS revealed aspects of the everyday that were unintended: Although the camera phones allowed users to capture and communicate daily 'images' of the monuments, the limitations in the text and the quality of the images of MMS messages triggered an 'imagination' of the everyday among the rest of the participants, i.e. further or alternative interpretations of monuments to the ones intended by the senders. Furthermore, these alternative interpretations, or 'imaginations', disclosed perceptions, preconceptions and understandings of the everyday and the monuments, which were not evident in the intended MMS messages. Camera phones have enabled us, indeed, to look 'at eyes that looked at the Emperor' (Barthes, 1982: 3), to look at everyday meanings of archaeological monuments, but what we have seen is much more than it was anticipated.

Acknowledgements

I would like to thank Anna Catalani and Dr. Areti Galani for their comments and suggestions on this paper.

Endnotes

1. Instead of the original: ‘these names’ (which refers to names of streets).

2. This study was part of a broader fieldwork research that included, also, observation, informal ethnographic interviews of residents, focus groups and in-depth interviews regarding everyday meanings of archaeological monuments in Thessaloniki.

3. P1, P2, etc. for Participant 1, Participant 2, etc.

References

Annotate Space, www.annotatespace.com. Consulted August 25, 2005.

Appadurai, A. (1986). The Social Life of Things. Commodities in Cultural Perspective. Cam bridge; New York; Melbourne: Cambridge University Press.

Arvanitis, K. (2005). Mobile gateways: Museums, mobile phones and the documentation of everyday life. In Maja Šojat-Bikić (Ed.) *Documentation & Users. Proceedings of the CIDOC Annual Conference,*Zagreb: Zagreb City Museum, 2005

Attfield, J. (2000). Wild Things. The Material Culture of Everyday Life, Oxford; New York: Berg.

Barthes, R. (1982). Camera Lucida. Reflections on Photography. (trans. by R. Howard). London: Jonathan Cape Ltd.

Bell, G. (2002). Making Sense of Museums: The Museum as 'Cultural Ecology. *Intel Labs*, 1-17 http://echo.iat.sfu.ca/library/bell_02_museum_ecology.pdf

Benjamin, W. (1973). The work of art in the age of mechanical reproduction. In H. Arendt (Ed.) *Illuminations*. New York: Schocken Books, 217-252.

Blanchot, M. and Hanson, S. (1987), Everyday speech. *Yale French Studies* 0/73, 12-20.

Brown, B., M. Chalmers, M. Bell, I. MacColl, M. Hall & P. Rudman, (2005). Sharing the square: collaborative visiting in the city streets. To appear in *Proceedings of CHI 2005*. Portland, Oregon, USA.

Brown, B. A. T., A. J. Sellen & K. P. O'Hara (2000). A diary study of information capture in working life. In: Turner, T. et al (Eds.) *Proceedings of CHI 2000*. The Hague, Holland: ACM Press, 438-445.

Cheverst, K., N. Davies, K. Mitchell, A. Friday & C. Efstratiou, (2000). Developing a Context-aware Electronic Tourist Guide: Some Issues and Experiences. *CHI Letters* 2, 1 17-24.

De Certeau, M. (1988). The Practice of Everyday Life (trans. by Steven Rendall). Berkeley; Los Angeles; London: University of California Press

Emmison M. & P. Smith, (2000). Researching the visual: images, objects, contexts and interactions in social and cultural inquiry. London: Sage.

Eriksson, O. (2002). Location Based Destination Information for the Mobile Tourist. In O. Eriksson (Ed.) Information and Communication Technologies in Tourism. Wien: Springer-Verlag, 255-264.

Giaglis, G., and Vrehopoulos, M. (2004). Worldwide Mobile Internet Survey, 3rd Round, Mobile Internet: Η Ελληνική Πραγματικότητα [The Greek Reality]. Athens: Athens University of Economics and Business.

Grinter, R. E. and M. Eldridge, (2003). Wan2tlk: Everyday Text Messaging. In *Proceedings of ACM Conference on Human Factors in Computing System (CHI 2003)*. Florida: ACM Press, 441-448.

Highmore, B. (2002), Everyday Life and Cultural Theory, London; New York: Routledge.

Ito, M., D. Okabe & M. Matsuda, (Eds.). (2005). Personal, Portable, Pedestrian: Mobile Phones in Japanese Life. Cambridge: MIT Press.

Izadi, S., M. Fraser, S. Benford, M. Flintham, C. Greenhalgh, T. Rodden & H. Schnaedelbach, (2002). Citywide: supporting interactive digital experiences across physical space. *Personal and Ubiquitous Computing* 6, 4, 290-298.

Koskinen, I. (2004) Seeing with Mobile Images: Towards Perpetual Visual Contact. In *Proceedings of The Global and the Local in Mobile Communication: Places, Images, People, Connections. Communication in the 21st century*.

Lefebvre, H. (1987). The Everyday and Everydayness. *Yale French Studies* 0/73, 7-11.

Macdonald, S. (1996). Introduction. In Macdonald, S. and G. Fyfe (Eds.) *Theorizing Museums*. Oxford and Malden: Blackwell Publishers, 1-18.

Malraux, A. (1967). Museum Without Walls. London: Secker and Warburg.

Mason, J. (2002). Qualitative Interviewing. London; Thousand Oaks; New Delhi

Miller, T. and McHoul, A. (1998). Popular Culture and Everyday Life. London; Thousand Oaks; New Delhi: Sage Publications

Osborne, B.S. (2001). Landscapes, Memory, Monuments, and Commemoration: Putting Identity in Its Place. Halifax, Nova Scotia: Department of Canadian Heritage.

Paulos, E. & E. Goodman (2004). The Familiar Stranger: Anxiety, Comfort, and Play in Public Spaces. In *Proceedings of the SIGCHI conference on Human factors in computing systems*. New York: ACM Press. 223-230.

Pink, S. (2001). Doing visual ethnography : images, media and representation in research. London: Sage.

Rohs, M. & B. Gfeller. (2004). Using Camera-Equipped Mobile Phones for Interacting With Real-World Objects. In A. Ferscha, H. Hoertner & G. Kotsis (Eds.) *Advances in Pervasive Computing, Austrian Computer Society (OCG)*. 265-271.

Sellen, A., R. Fleck, T. Kindberg, M. Spasojevic, (2004). How and Why People Use Camera Phones. *Microsoft Research* TR-127.

Shabajee, P., L. Miller & A. Dingley. (2002). Adding Value to Large Multimedia Collections Through Annotation Technologies and Tools: Serving Communities of Interest. In D. Bearman & J. Trant (Eds.) *Museums and the Web 98 Proceedings*. CD ROM. Archives & Museum Informatics,1998.

Townsend, A. M. (2000). Life in the Real-Time City: Mobile Telephones and Urban Metabolism. *Journal of Urban Technology* 7, 2, 85-104.

Urban Tapestries, http://urbantapestries.net/ Proboscis. last updated June 14, 2005. Consulted August 25, 2005.

West, N. (2005). Urban Tapestries. The spatial and social on your mobile. *Proboscis Cultural Snapshots Number Ten*, 1-5.

Wood, A. G. Davenport, B. Donovan & C. Strohecker, (2004). Stories for remote place: content, structure, device, trials. In *Digital Culture & Heritage. Proceedings of ICHIM 2004*. CD ROM. Archives & Museum Informatics Europe, 2004