

# THE CROSSCULT HERALD

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CROSSCULT H2020 PROJECT NEWSLETTER

June 2017 edition

## MAKING HISTORY FUN: THE ROLE OF HUMANITIES IN THE CROSSCULT PROJECT



Our cultural heritage is an amazing combination of multiple factors conditioned from our past and the evolution of different societies along the centuries. So, our comprehension about the present can be better explained analysing our past and doing a comparison among different realities. This understanding can help us to open our minds to different people, concepts, and practices.

In this interdisciplinary Project the collaboration between Humanities and Technicians offer the possibility of novel reflections about our past and present, leading to enhanced content, guaranteeing high scientific quality.

In that sense technology is not simply a tool to augment existing humanities practices, but it can change the nature of the work in ways that can greatly benefit humanities experts and should be explored in depth. Therefore, CrossCult will investigate ways not only to bridge technology and humanities but also to propose engaging ways to present the outcomes of our interdisciplinary work to the public, through unique visitor experiences in pilot studies. For example, games, social network activities and active user participation, including individuals and groups will be applied.

In addition, the world has entered the digital era and it is important that humanities align with the digital domain and therefore reach more people. Technology in this light, is particularly useful because traditional visitor experiences seems out-dated. Furthermore, technology can allow us to target upper level learning by not only enhancing memorization but also enhancing synthesis, analysis, and evaluation of information.

History becomes relevant to people, becomes attractive and popular and at the same time, people are trained to process different inputs and come up with unique viewing angles and enrich our collective understanding with new reflections.

Finally, we believe that history can be relevant, engaging and even fun to young people and learners around the world. Follow us around the different European venues to see our efforts within CrossCult and see how our vision is becoming a reality.

## PROFILE OF THE MONTH



**Antonios Liapis** is a Lecturer at the Institute of Digital Games, University of Malta, where he teaches at M.Sc. level on a variety of topics including game development, prototyping, and computational intelligence and creativity.

Specifically, he explores the limits of computational input to the human-driven design process in computer-aided design tools. Beyond AI-assisted game design, his research pursuits revolve around procedural content generation, digital aesthetics, evolutionary computation, neuroevolution and constrained optimization. He has published over 50 international journal and conference papers in the aforementioned fields, and has won several awards. Moreover, he has led or participated in the design and development of several games of varying scope and for different target audiences, including two FP7 ICT projects.

Antonios Liapis contributes to an already broad and interdisciplinary CrossCult team along two core axes: a) game design and b) computational creativity. Having developed a plethora of digital and analog games, Antonios assists during the design and implementation of pilots targeting a smooth and engaging user experience, which motivates users to contribute their own opinions and reflect on curated or crowdsourced information and interactions.

## WE ARE CURRENTLY READING

[An ensemble method to produce high-quality word embeddings](#), 2016, Speer, R., Chin, J.

*“we at UVIGO believe word embeddings can be very useful to refine some of the semantic reasoning procedures implemented in the first version of the CrossCult components. Specifically, we are interested in developing word embeddings specifically trained on large collections of documents about cultural heritage and history in order to improve the assessment of the relevance of multimedia documents and semantic entities to given reflective topics”.*

[A survey and critique of deep learning on recommender systems](#), 2016, Zheng, L.

*“this is very helpful when trying to come up with questions and hypotheses about how we may use machine learning in the algorithms that drive the formation of groups of people that will participate in CrossCult experiences together, considering all the aspects of interests, knowledge on different subjects, personality, cognitive patterns and mobility”.*

[Still quite popular after all those years: the continued relevance of the information retrieval thesaurus](#). 2016, Tudhope, D., Binding, C.

*“The paper considers the question of whether the traditional thesaurus has any place in modern information retrieval. It highlights the role and relevance of Thesauri in the Linked Data area, and discusses prominent work that employs thesauri in three key areas of infrastructure underpinning advanced retrieval functionality today: metadata enrichment, vocabulary mapping and web services”.*

[Experiencing the Digital World: The Cultural Value of Digital Engagement with Heritage](#), 2016, King, L., Stark, J.F., Cooke, P.

*“The paper present strategies that heritage organizations of different scales might consider incorporating into new digital resources, while also suggesting further areas for research. It is a great reading that reveals that there is substantial untapped potential to better understand the experience of end users by harnessing the vast amount of data that is available within heritage institutions”.*

## PROJECT NEWS

Following a fruitful EU review meeting in Brussels on May 5th, 2017 and a general project meeting in Madrid on June 12-14, 2017 we are now getting ready for the four Pilots taking place in National Gallery (Pilot 1), the Roman healing spas of Lugo and Chaves, the Archaeological site of Aquae Tauri and the ancient theatre of Epidauros (Pilot 2), Archeological Museum of Tripolis (Pilot 3), and City of Valleta and Luxembourg (Pilot 4).

## FOR YOUR AGENDA

Explore some of the forthcoming conferences relevant to the CrossCult project:

- [11<sup>th</sup> International Conference on MTSR](#), November 28<sup>th</sup> – December 1<sup>st</sup> 2017, Tallin, Estonia
- [GHI Conference on Digital Humanities and Digital History](#), October 26-28, 2017 in Washington, DC.

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