THE 1914 FORCED DISPLACEMENT OF THE OTTOMAN GREEK POPULATION OF PHOCAEA: AN ONLINE INTERACTIVE DOCUMENTARY

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ABSTRACT

The 1914 forced displacement of the Ottoman Greek population of Phocaea: an online interactive documentary
by Krystalli Glyniadakis

Focusing on an often overlooked series of violent events during the decade preceding the collapse of the Ottoman Empire, this interactive documentary brings together a synthesis of microhistory, oral history, historiography, and digital non-linear interactive architecture and narrative capabilities, in an effort to inform, educate, entertain, and surprise its users. It is a digital ark of memory about the June 12-13, 1914 looting of the coastal towns of Old Phocaea and New Phocaea (in what is now Turkey) by Ottoman government-backed irregulars, with the aim of forcefully expelling the local Ottoman Greek population. An instance of ethnic cleansing, the events easily feed into the decades-long hostile character of Greco-Turkish relations which builds on victimization and retaliation. Yet through extensive historical research, original interviews with historians from both Turkey and Greece, the translation and curation of eye-witnesses' statements and memoirs, photographic evidence, newspaper clippings, official ministerial correspondence, and original video interviews with Greeks and Turks connected to the towns, the *Phocaea 1914* i-doc challenges –for anyone with a WiFi connection– the supposed inevitability of Greco-Turkish antagonism by providing access to first-hand accounts of what perpetrators thought and victims experienced, and by highlighting stories of mutual understanding that span more than a century. It does that by building a user experience that simulates what a historical researcher does: discovers and cross-checks diverse historical data and appreciates the interpretational conflicts hidden in putting them together into narratives. In this way, *Phocaea 1914* does what journalistic and history i-docs rarely do: it questions its own main narrative lines, presents divergent historical interpretations, and provides users with the means to compare them against each other and against historical evidence. It thus serves as a prototype for future i-doc designers who may wish to incorporate historical research into their work –and must acknowledge the tension between the veracity of facts and the subjectivity of representation and performance– as well as for historians who might want to examine digital interactive ways to conduct and showcase research, and to teach methodology to their students. It can also be utilised in future empirical studies that will systematically test whether meaning-complexity in online interactive platforms encourages open-mindedness in users and/or behavioural tolerance towards 'the Other'.

(363 words)

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*

AUTHOR'S DECLARATION

All digital content included in the *Phocaea 1914* interactive documentary (videos, sounds, texts, photographs, etc.) has been either originally produced or curated for the specific purpose of said artefact. All design, production, and curatorial choices are the author's own – and so any responsibility for their use or content rests solely with the author.

“Tarih yazıcılığı özgürleştirmiyorsa, zulme hizmet ediyordur.”

(If history writing does not emancipate, it must be serving tyranny)

– Cemal Kafadar

[A NOTE ON NAMES & DATES]

In the past 100 years, much has changed in and around the Aegean Sea: populations have moved (forcefully or not), empires have broken down, and borders have been redrawn. These changes are often reflected in the shifting names of towns and areas covered in this exegesis and its accompanying interactive documentary. Greek and Turkish placenames have always coexisted around here, depending on who speaks and in which language; but for clarity's sake, any names you might encounter shall reflect the historical period in which they are discussed. In this sense, Phocaea –the area on which this research focuses– has also shifted from a primarily Greek-speaking town in 1914 to an exclusively Turkish-speaking one today, and so its name reflects this ethnic and linguistic change.

As a handy reference point, here is a quick list of shifting placenames and the time period they reflect in this exegesis and its accompanying i-doc:

1914		***2021***	
Placename	***Country***	***Placename***	***Country***
Old Phocaea	*Ottoman Empire*	*Eski Foça*	*Turkey*
New Phocaea	*Ottoman Empire*	*Yeni Foça*	*Turkey*
Constantinople	*Ottoman Empire*	*Istanbul*	*Turkey*
Smyrna	*Ottoman Empire*	*Izmir*	*Turkey*
X	*X*	*Palaia Fokaia (founded in 1924)*	*Greece*
X	*X*	*Nea Fokaia (founded in 1924)*	*Greece*

Please also note that "Asia Minor" and "Anatolia" are interchangeable geographical terms designating the same *area: the landmass of the Turkish peninsula in Asia, i.e. Turkey without its European provinces or islands and without its eastern and south-eastern provinces*[1]*.*

Also note that parts of this exegesis and the accompanying documentary may display "double" dates. Back in Ottoman times, not everyone kept the same calendar: the Ottoman Empire used the Rumi Islamic Calendar, the Kingdom of Greece and its consulates the Julian calendar, and the rest of Europe the Gregorian calendar (13 days ahead of the other two). For practical purposes, dates in this PhD are designated according to the Gregorian calendar, today's global standard, unless stated otherwise. Here's a quick example from the date on which the looting of Old Phocaea began:

Ottoman (Rumi)	*Greek (Julian)*	*European (Gregorian)*
30 May 1330	*30 May 1914*	***12 June 1914***

fig1. Ethnic groups in the Balkans and Asia Minor (Western Anatolia) in the early 20th century.

(A map created exclusively for the "Phocaea 1914" i-doc, based on William Robert Shepherd's 1911 Historical Atlas, published by Henry Holt and Co., New York, NY[2])

fig.2 Map Legend based on W .R. Shepherd's 1911 Historical Atlas

CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

1.1 Setting the scene

A few weeks before the beginning of World War I, in the early summer of 1914, a series of violent attacks took place in hundreds of towns and villages along the Aegean coast of Turkey (then still the Ottoman Empire). Among them were two port towns to the north of Izmir, opposite the Greek island of Lesbos: Old Phocaea and New Phocaea (in Turkish: *Eski Foça* and *Yeni Foça*).

The attackers were gangs of irregular bandits (called *çete* and *başıbozuk*) armed with government-issued Martini rifles and other weapons. Encouraged by high-ranking officials in the Ottoman government, their mission was to surround and enter villages and towns, loot all that was valuable, and drive away the local population.

Their targets were the Greek-speaking, Christian Orthodox citizens of the Empire, hereafter referred to as "Ottoman Greeks"[3]. The Ottoman Greeks were among the many official *millets* and their sub-categories (religious/legal communities)[4] in the empire, other *millets* being the Armenians, the Bulgarians, the Assyrians, the Jews, the Protestants etc –and of course, the Muslims themselves. According to a 1914 official Ottoman Census, the total number of Ottoman Greeks in the empire amounted to around 1.8 million[5] (but do note that Ottoman censuses focused primarily on the male population, so the numbers underestimate the total populace).

The reasons behind the attacks are manifold and sometimes contested –and this complexity shall be brought out in this thesis– but their results are unequivocal and internationally recorded: hundreds of thousands fled the Ottoman Empire towards, mostly, Greece.

Among those attacked and fleeing in 1914 were the entire Ottoman Greek populations of Eski (Old) and Yeni (New) Foça/Phocaea, just below 20,000 people. We shall refer to them as "Phocaeans" hereafter.

Fast forward five years later, in 1919, and just as World War I had come to an end and the defeated Ottoman Empire was forced to sign an armistice, Greek troops –encouraged by their victorious allies, the British– were sent to occupy a chunk of the western coast of Turkey, "to secure peace" [Mango 2009: 63]. Almost half of the Ottoman Greeks who had fled in 1914 now came back on the heels of the occupying Greek army. The Phocaeans were among them. They rebuilt their ruined homes and resumed cultivating their lands. Often, they had to chase away another miserable bunch of refugees: Muslims from the Balkans who, fleeing the 1912-1913 Balkan Wars, had been directed to occupy the abandoned Greek properties in the summer of 1914. In the meantime, the Allies occupied Istanbul.

The repatriation of Ottoman Greeks did not last long nor end well: never having negotiated the onerous terms of surrender dictated to them by the Allies, and angered at "the almost colonial

way they were treated in their own [occupied] capital" [Zurcher 2010: 194], Turks took up arms in 1919. The occupying Greek army thought they could crush the insurgents into submission. A three-year Greco-Turkish war ensued, ending in a dramatic defeat for Greece in September 1922.

Hundreds of thousands of Ottoman Greeks were either killed during this war, or perished in death marches or labour battalions, or were forced to flee as refugees to Greece [Midlarsky 2005: 342] –some for the second time (the Phocaeans included). A year later, what was left of the living Greek presence in Asia Minor was extinguished, as an official treaty between Greece and Turkey forcefully exchanged Muslim populations from Greece with Ottoman Greek populations of Turkey (the Muslims of Western Thrace and the Orthodox Greeks (*Rum*) of Istanbul and the islands of Imvros/Gökçeada & Tenedos/Bozcaada were exempt). It was an attempt to stop the two countries from ever going to war over their respective religious minorities again. It worked too, even if today we consider such once-legal forced population exchanges as a form of ethnic cleansing[6].

By 1924, less than 200,000 Ottoman Greeks were left in Turkey. The Turks refer to the Greco-Turkish war of 1919-1922 as *The War of Independence*. The Greeks, simply, as *The Catastrophe*. It is a core part of each country's national narrative.

Fleeing Turkey for the second time in 1922, the displaced Greek Phoceans scattered throughout Greece. By July 1924, they had founded at least two new communities, named after their lost homelands: *Palaia Fokaia* (Old Phocaea), 43 kms outside of Athens; and *Nea Fokaia* (New Phocaea), 82 kms outside of Thessaloniki. A hundred years later, these two communities have (by their own initiative) re-established ties with the Turks of the two Foças and visit each other often, curating local history symposia and culture festivals in both Greece and Turkey. This thesis (and its accompanying interactive documentary) is about the beginnings of their story as refugees: how it all unfolded back in June 1914. And about how people –Greeks and Turks– remember these events and try to heal the transgenerational wounds they precipitated.

*

I happened to grow up a small distance from Palaia Fokaia, outside of Athens. Yet, I'd never heard of the 1914 events –unlike the 1922 *Catastrophe*, which is a ubiquitous narrative in almost every household in Greece, not least of all in mine: my grandmother was a 1922 refugee herself from another town in Asia Minor, called Akhisar. I first found out about the 1914 attacks on Phocaea by accident, from a film documentary directed by Agnes Sklavou and Stelios Tatakis[7]. In an interview I conducted with the auteurs, they admitted to also having been oblivious to the events until happening upon a series of photographs recovered by chance by the Paris-based collector Haris Yiakoumis (also originally unaware of the events depicted in the images he had discovered). These were stereoscopic photographs taken by the French engineer Félix Sartiaux, who happened to be excavating ancient ruins near Old Phocaea at the time of the attacks; his photographs from the two Phocaeas are the

only visual record of any of the 1914 oustings, which took place in hundreds of villages and towns along the entire Aegean coast of Turkey.

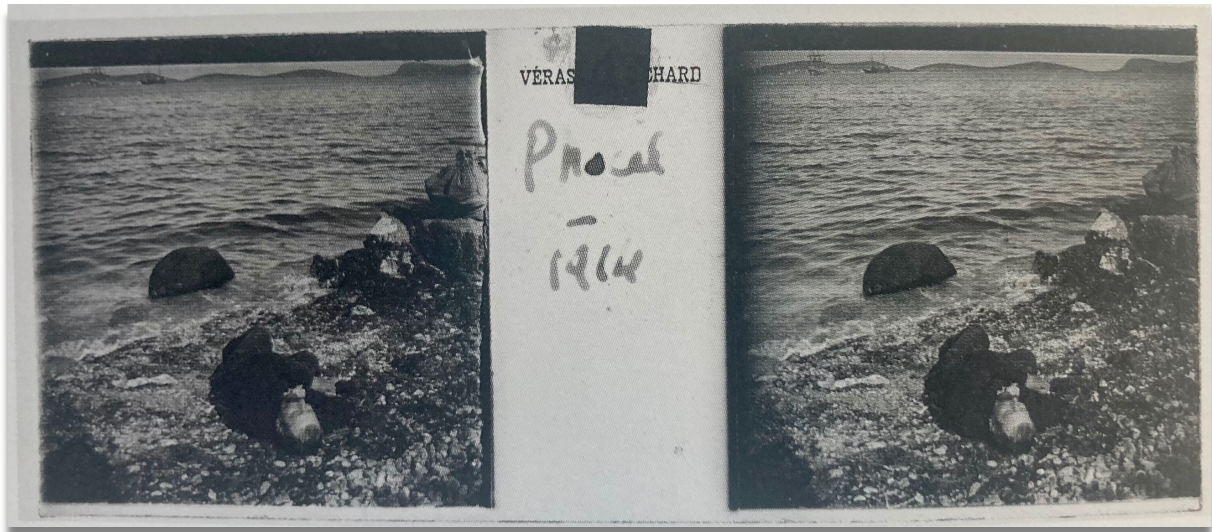

fig.3 A stereoscopic photograph taken by Félix Sartiaux on Saturday, 13 June 1914, depicting the corpse of a man on the beach at Old Phocaea's Mikros Yialos neighbourhood. (Reproduced here from Yiakoumis 2008: 203)

Yiakoumis understood what he had chanced upon when reading an online article by Zacharo Frantzeskou, a resident of Palaia Fokaia, in which she spoke of her grandfather's memories and stories of 1914. In the course of my research I interviewed Zacharo; her interview is part of the practical component of this PhD. Looking back, it now feels almost as if the story of Phocaea has wanted to be told again and again, each time in a different, enriched, "newer" medium: text (Zacharo) to photographs (Yiakoumis) to film (Sklavou and Tatakis) to online interactive documentary.

*

My discovery of the 1914 events was revelatory. I began to wonder why these events, despite being brutal, had been blocked off from Greek collective memory. Was it because they were followed by a larger, even more traumatic catastrophe? And what about the narrative on the other side of the Aegean? In most parts of Turkey, people have no knowledge of –let alone pride in– their towns' once thriving non-Muslim communities; my grandmother's hometown, Akhisar, is a prime example of such lost memory. And yet, when I first visited Eski Foça (Old Phocaea), Turkey, in the summer of 2013, I was startled by how current residents have lovingly restored the Greeks' houses. Everything about the 1914 Phocaea story defied my expectations: Greeks –whose national narrative encourages the remembrance of Turkish atrocities– were largely unaware that persecuted Ottoman Greeks had fled Asia Minor twice in eight years; and local Turks –whose national narrative discourages the remembrance of the once ubiquitous presence of non-Turkish populations in their country– were actively promoting the Ottoman Greek heritage of their town. What was going on?

It might not come as a surprise now to realise that dominant national narratives often shove to the side stories that don't quite fit their demands; in this case, a tale of state-endorsed violence but also of communal coexistence and rapprochement. But none of this was obvious to me when I was first confronted with the story of Phocaea, which pushed against accepted victimization narratives on either side of the Aegean. If the Greeks were victimized why would they and their children want to make friends with the Turks again? If the Muslim *millet* represented 83% of the population of the Ottoman Empire in 1914 (see endnote 5) and the coexistence with other *millets* was largely harmonious [Hirschon 1998: 29-30; Doumanis 2013], why would the Ottoman government and some of its Muslim citizens feel threatened by these "ungrateful minorities" [Bayar 1965-67/2019: 109-110] enough to want them driven out of the land? Could I find ways of comprehending the motives behind the attacks without undermining their traumatic brutality? Could I find ways of appreciating the impulse of the descendants of refugees to make peace with the descendants of the people who moved in to occupy their abandoned homes?

These historical and emotional complexities are what kept me coming back to the story of Phocaea again and again, and I've tried to bring them out in this exegesis and the main, practical element of this PhD: the i-doc itself. The events in Phocaea are a part of a much larger reality of ethnic and religious violence characterising a crumbling Empire faced with struggles for national self-determination and nation-building wars. Phocaea can very well be seen as instance of the wider demographic engineering that was taking place as the Ottoman Empire was disintegrating, whether as the result of wars or perpetrated oustings (Muslim populations fleeing the Balkans or the Caucasus; Christian populations fleeing Anatolia). More symbolically perhaps, it can be seen as a "mini-Smyrna": a primarily Greek port-town that was looted and burnt so that its Greek population would disappear from the scene, the way the iconic port of Smyrna (Izmir) was burnt at the end of the Greco-Turkish war, forever afterwards becoming the symbol of the virtual disappearance of Anatolia's Greek element, after 3,000 years of continued presence there. But most disturbingly, Phocaea is part of the drive to "Turkify" the multi-ethnic Ottoman Empire, a dress-rehearsal for what was to take place a year later: the Armenian genocide; which –as has become evident in recent historiography and is presented in the digital component of this PhD– was largely perpetrated by the same people who planned and executed the oustings of Ottoman Greeks from Phocaea and the entire Aegean coast of Asia Minor, only to repeat their acts of ethnic cleansing shortly afterwards, but on a larger, full-blown genocidal scale. In other words, when it comes to the importance of the 1914 events in Phocaea, one can say the following: what makes Phocaea unique among the other anti-Greek pogroms at the time is Felix Sartiaux' photographic record; what makes it sinister is how it foreshadows the Armenian genocide and the burning of Smyrna during the 1922 *Catastrophe*. And what makes it surprising is how the collective trauma of being kicked out of one's homeland has been unexpectedly metabolized into a willingness for Greco-Turkish rapprochement.

1.2 Why an online interactive documentary?

I have always been interested in how understanding the complexity of this world deprives one of the arrogance of being right. Part of coming to terms with this complexity –and hence becoming more tolerant towards those we disagree with– is to realise that there are more than one tenable ways of looking at real-life events: more than one ways of connecting any potential explanatory dots.

Not all such 'dot-connecting exercises' are appropriate to all purposes: there are explanations that are clearly factually erroneous or inaccurate (because they defy the laws of physics, say, or contradict or ignore available evidence) yet remain desirable and/or effective in other ways: fictional or even false narratives can be like that, for example. "Narratives are successful or not, interesting or not, influential or not, but narratives do not rely upon truth-value for their success" notes Ajit Maan, narrative warfare strategist, in a 2015 article in *Foreign Policy* magazine [Ricks 2015].

It is a point echoed by Florian Thalhofer, creator of *Korsakow* (a software programme for the creation of non-linear, browser-based, interactive narratives), but less as a statement and more as a warning cry. Thalhofer has an issue with successful dot-connecting (i.e. linear, causal) narratives –especially in non-fiction practices such as journalism– because they build suspense through conflict, and "to get good conflict you need high contrasts, you want to portray things in black and white" [Thalhofer 2017]. Linear stories pit adversaries against each other (or a protagonist against challenges) and drive the plot forward through the overcoming of such conflicts/challenges, creating a feedback loop where suspense feeds emotion and emotion demands suspense –and hence more conflict[8]. The more successful such narratives are, he says, the more they can become "instrument[s] that divide the world into good and bad", nurturing a binary, non-nuanced view of the world that ignores its natural complexity [Thalhofer 2019], providing people "with the illusion that they know all they need to know" [Thalhofer 2018].

By contrast, he says, multi-nodal/non-linear, interactive narratives (such as those enabled by his own software) whose dramatic structure rests on multiple angles and the possibility to navigate through them at will, capture what life is *really* about: complex situations that do not conform to a single, linear explanatory line, but exhibit the multiplicity of meanings different people assign to events through their choices [Thalhofer 2017]. Seeing the world in such terms is "important in a time of increasing global, regional, and local conflict between belief systems", agrees multimedia filmmaker (and founder of idocs.org) Judith Aston, developing further Thalhofer's reasoning: "the capacity for computers for mapping and interrogating complexity and multiple points of view offers the potential to help us understand that what we see as the 'other' is often a different lens through which we can look at the 'self'." [Aston 2016 n.p.]

It is worth unpacking Thalhofer and Aston's argument in its four separate assumptions:

1. The world is naturally complex.

2. Meaning is created by individuals (i.e. it's not "out-there").

3. A medium that allows for multiplicity of meanings mirrors the world's complexity.

4. Familiarization with complexity breeds critical self-understanding. Hence,

If we want to increase critical self-reflection, we need to depict the complexity of the world through media narratives that allow for multiple points of view.

And if we want to veridically depict the complexity of the world, we shall aim at constructing narratives that allow for multiple points of view; the more we do this, the more self-critical [and open-minded] we will become.

There are several ways to attack this way of thinking, aimed at each one of the abovementioned premises: by denying the complexity of the world, or the fact that meaning is constructed; by arguing that a perception of complexity does not guarantee real complexity (think of conspiracy theories), or by denying that a perception of –real or not– complexity breeds critical self-reflection and open-mindedness. But this is not a philosophical thesis about the nature of the world and/or meaning. To me, the implication of the Thalhofer/Aston line of thinking is clear: *on the assumption that* encountering complexity encourages critical self-reflection and open-mindedness (and banishing complexity encourages conflict), and because I consider open-mindedness to be a desirable quality, I was keen to build and explore a structure that welcomes complexity[9].

Now, as already explained, the 1914 events in Phocaea –and their aftermath and reception today– resist non-nuanced explanations that set up binary oppositions between perpetrators and victims on one side, loyalists and traitors on the other; they defy, that is, national narrative expectations about the past and the present on both sides of the Aegean. They are thus, in principle, a good match for exploring non-linear, interactive, documentary storytelling strategies *à la manière de* Thalhofer and Aston. And, reciprocally, such non-linear, interactive documentary vehicles are, in principle, well suited to bringing out the complexities of the Phocaea 1914 events. It was for this reason that I initially decided to engage in building an online interactive documentary in which I'd incorporate my research into the 1914 Phocaea events: to explore whether, how, and to what extent the –manifestly existent but still to be researched– complexities of the Phocaea story could be brought out by this new medium, the online interactive documentary.

And how would that complexity come to play out? It eventually became clear that one such way would be to simulate the experience of a historical researcher as they research history: to create, in other words, a "historical researcher experience" which would allow the user of the i-doc to discover and collect diverse evidence/data, cross-check them for veracity by reference to the existing bibliography, understand that in order to make sense of a larger picture one needs to enter the world of interpretation, appreciate that there exist conflicting interpretations none of which is value-free, be able to discern –to some extent– the hidden value judgements behind each, and have this "detective work" potentially enhance his/her available historical knowledge.

I am of course aware that, without a follow-up, systematic, empirical study, I cannot show that the particular type of complexity exhibited in the *Phocaea 1914* i-doc encourages open-mindedness. However, this is something I believe may be able to happen and almost certainly will *not* happen if we don't go for complexity. There exists considerable bibliography to support this line of thinking –that complexity, in general, encourages open-mindedness– (surveyed in more detail in *Chapter 3: Literature Review*, when we will be talking about complexity, meaning-making, interactivity, and non-linearity vis-à-vis i-docs and historiography), but it provides *fragments* of proof –usually through reader-response studies– in fields as diverse as drama, ludology, hypertext, and new media. And so one of the additional motivations behind my work was to build not only a site that people can visit and actively engage with, but also *a future testing site*, in which follow-up studies can potentially test the hypothesis that interactivity and fragmentation do allow for critical appreciation of different readings of a historical event.

That said, I must, in concluding this introduction, highlight an additional, deeply personal motivation behind the *Phocaea 1914* i-doc. It is an incentive that builds on the above-mentioned considerations, but took roots the more I engaged with the available material, especially after conducting interviews with residents on both sides of the Aegean: *Phocaea 1914* has been built in order to act as a sort of digital ark of memory and a conduit for bilateral communication between the Greek Fokaia and Turkish Foça communities. It will have a post-PhD life since it is to be "released" (with certain linguistic and technical alterations) to these communities so that *they* may enrich its content with elements I did not collect or may not have been aware of, and so that *they* become the sole negotiators of the meanings they may assign to their common history. The design strategies employed towards this end will be detailed in *Chapter 5: Methodology of Research II – i-doc design and rationale*. But the impetus was clear, and mentioned above too: the story of Phocaea has been told through an increasing level of novelty and complexity, both content- and structure-wise: text to photographs, to film, to online interactive documentary now. In its most recent incarnation, it opens itself up to a greater audience, to the interactive capacities of the digital era, and to the possibilities of co-creation: anyone, anywhere can have access to never-before-digitized and new material, as long as they have a WiFi connection, and –eventually– the communities themselves will be able to add (and control) auxiliary information through mutual unofficial Greco-Turkish negotiation. Whether that constitutes a "democratisation" of the Phocaea story (and to what extent one can democratize historical narratives) will be briefly discussed further in *Chapter 6: Reflections & Conclusions*; but a satisfactory answer needs a separate research paper. Until then, the *Phocaea 1914* i-doc can act as a platform for raising such theoretical concerns, whether in terms of democratization and/or impact on critical self-reflection.

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CHAPTER 2: PROJECT AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

2.1 Overall Project Aim

The overall aims of this PhD are two:

a) To research and contextualise the historical events that may be collectively described as "the 1914 forced displacement of the Ottoman Greek population of Old and New Phocaea" and the way they are remembered by the descendants of Ottoman Greek refugees and by the current Turkish residents of the area –via available historical archives, primary and secondary bibliographical sources, and interviews conducted specifically for this reason; and
b) To construct an online interactive documentary that will exhibit this research in a manner that is conducive to critical self-reflection vis-à-vis navigational choices on behalf of the producer (me) and the user. To make it accessible to anyone who wishes to learn about [a] through a dedicated website whose URL is https://phocaea1914.org/

In other words, this PhD aims to create an online interactive documentary called *Phocaea 1914* (@https://phocaea1914.org/) which, if designed and curated well, allows the users to learn what happened in Phocaea in June 1914, examine why it happened within a larger historical context, understand the mindset of perpetrators and victims, comprehend how modern Greeks and Turks connected to the area may remember the events in a certain manner –or forget all, or part of what happened– and how official Greek and Turkish narratives may perpetuate such cognitive bias, and explore interesting and entertaining side-stories, all within a coherent, interactive, non-linear narrative universe.

Whether the overall aims have been successfully achieved is part of this PhD's reflective component: there have been three digital iteration of the *Phocaea 1914* website, only the final of which is now available online. Going from paper prototype to the final iteration took a trial-and-error approach whose methodology is described in detail in the *Methodology* section of this exegesis.

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2.2. Particular Objectives

The particular objectives that needed to be satisfied on the way to meeting the dual overall aim –and the way I sought to meet them– were as follows:

	OBJECTIVES	WAYS TO MEET THEM	IN THIS DOCUMENT
1	Learn about the non-linear, interactive nature of i-docs and single out those features that can be conducive or hostile to using such a vehicle in doing and showcasing research about the past.	1. Review available literature on the nature and characteristics of i-docs (non-linearity/ interactivity)	*Literature Review 3.3*
		2. Review available literature on how historians have used non-linearity and interactivity to conduct historical research	*Literature Review 3.2*
2	Collect the pieces of information/ historical evidence that will eventually become the content of the online i-doc *Phocaea 1914*	1. Review available literature on the 1914 events and on how they fit into a larger historical and geographic framework.	*Literature Review 3.1*
		2. Look for and collect archival material: > Locate oral or written testimonies in archives > Collect newspaper clippings from the time relating to the events > Acquire the rights to use Félix Sartiaux' photographs for the i-doc > Locate official documents that may pertain to the displacement	*Methodology of Research I: Content*
		3. Film on location in Greece and Turkey: > Interview expert historians > Interview descendants of Phocaean refugees in Greece > Interview current residents of Eski and Yeni Foça in Turkey	*Methodology of Research I: Content*
3	Build the *Phocaea 1914* i-doc	1. Produce and curate the content: > Translate and subtitle collected archival documents > Curate newspaper clippings > Edit, translate, and subtitle memoirs-turned-videos > Translate, subtitle, and curate found official documents	*Methodology of Research II: i-doc rationale & design*
		2. Work closely with a coder/web-designer to try out different "architectures" of putting the collected material together.	
4	Test (and revisit) the i-doc	1. Choose (and justify) method(s) of testing	*Methodology of Research II: i-doc rationale & design*
		2. Test, and collect feedback from diverse kinds of users; incorporate feedback into new iterations and/or limited design changes.	
5	Reflect on the process	Critically reflect on the process of building the i-doc and on the responses received.	*Reflections & Conclusions*
6	Lay out a provisional chart of further research possibilities opened up by the creation of the *Phocaea 1914* i-doc.	1. Suggest further research that can build on the *Phocaea 1914* i-doc	*Reflections & Conclusions*
		2. Place the new research possibilities within a brief review of existing literature	

fig. 4 Table of Particular Objectives

These steps shall of course be covered in more detail in later sections of this document. It is important, however, to note from the start that none were done in isolation from one another: from an initial, brief literature review, I moved on to archival research, then back to literature review, then interview collection, producing (cutting/editing/translating/subtitling) videos, discussing and designing the i-doc with the web-designer, then again back to conducting interviews and further archival research (translating/recording). Then, once the first digital iteration of the i-doc was up and running, I was back on the drawing board with collecting and incorporating feedback. To make a long story short: researching, building, testing, and reflecting upon the i-doc did not involve distinct phases, but processes that fed back into each other. This was an evolving project, not a complete mental-design-turned-digital-prototype, neither a pre-existing digital artefact that needed to be simply user-tested (like in Kate Nash's audience study of *Bear 71* [Nash: 2014], or in James Pope's study of user responses to 5 NMWP interactive narratives [Pope: 2020]). Designing it, testing it, and reflecting upon the feedback concurrently meant giving birth to different design strategies and evolving iterations, a process detailed later on in *Chapter 5: Methodology of Research II: i-doc rationale and design*[10].

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2.3 Original Contribution

The web-based interactive documentary format has rarely been used as a platform for *historical research.* To put it more simply, even if there are several web-based interactive documentaries tagged under both "History" and "Interactive" (for example *Clouds Over Cuba* [Joiner 2013], *After 6/*4 [Chen 2014], *The Texas Slavery Project* [Torget, 2007-2008]) and even if a lot of them employ journalistic and other research skills for the user journey, very few have been constructed with the conscious effort of *exposing* the complexity of meanings hidden at the heart of historical narratives and addressing historiographical debates about veracity and meaning-making (a notable exception being the project *Parallel Histories* [Davies 2017- ongoing], which is not really an i-doc, but uses i-doc elements to inspire e-learning in history and historiography).

Historical narratives are, like all narratives, value-laden syntheses that should be treated as such. This does not mean that historical narratives are fabrications, or "anything goes", as Roland Barthes would have had us think[11]; we do recognize historical explanations as *false* if they rely on falsified, say, evidence – and we often think of them as dangerous too (think of revisionist accounts that deny the existence of Auschwitz). A bibliographical study of the tension between the veracity of historical facts and the subjectivity of historical interpretations will be offered in *Chapter 3: Literature Review*, but the reader should be reminded here that "our way of reading a source derives principally from our present-day concerns" (Evans 200: 109) and that this goes for historical research too. Yet most "historical" interactive documentaries fail to highlight the negotiable and negotiated nature of

their representational content and architecture: they don't present divergent nor conflicting narrative lines, neither do they emphasize the need –let alone provide the means– to cross-check their content. *Phocaea 1914* does.

By contrast, out of the 390 projects (as of December 2020) collected on MIT's Open Doc Lab's *Docubase*, for example, only 14 are interactive documentaries tackling historical themes, and of those only 6 aim to expose the conflicting interpretations that historians regularly encounter in their research. So with the notable exceptions of *Empire Interactive* [Jongsma & O'Neill 2014], *Clouds Over Cuba* [Joiner 2013], *After 6/4* [Chen 2014], *The Iron Curtain Diaries* [Miotto & Scanni 2009], *Isabel, La conquista de Granada* [Fernandez et al. 2014], and *Love Radio* [Steketee & Blankevoort 2014], the digital treatment of history on the Doculab's platform either retains a main narrative line chosen by the author, or assumes more immersive forms (VR docs, web-based games etc.).

Phocaea 1914 does something different: it is designed so as to offer to the users an "amateur historical researcher experience" –by highlighting their involvement in constructing an understanding of the events through navigational choices– and encourages them to corroborate or refute such an understanding against available conflicting interpretations of what happened, at all times. The way this is done is the topic of *Chapter 5: Methodology of Research II: i-doc rationale and design*. We spoke earlier about i-docs being vehicles with multiple entry- and exit-points and multiple ways to navigate around their content, something which enables authors to free themselves from forcing a point of view onto their audience (Aston& Gaudenzi 2012:133) and demands that users proceed only on the basis of choices they make (Yellowless Douglas 2000: 42). It is clearly a shame that most historical i-docs do not draw attention –through their design and content– to those two mechanisms that may encourage critical thinking via an encounter with complexity: (a) the fact that there is more than one legitimate ways to tell a story about verifiable past events, and (b) the fact that consumers of history need to be alert to the meanings they construct through their choices.

It also employs content (interviews, photographs, timelines, videos, etc.) produced *specifically and originally* for this i-doc, complemented with archival materials in four different languages, curated in an innovative manner. It also spans across time (1914/2020) and space (Greece/Turkey). And so, all in all, it offers multiple original contributions to knowledge, whether they be original historical research, primary research, curating content, and building and designing an "amateur historical researcher" experience.

In summary, this PhD project produces original knowledge on four levels:

1. It systematically showcases thoroughly **researched, originally produced and curated new and archival content** that complements and expands upon the existing literature of the 1914 Phocaea events and their place within the larger historical context of the end of the Ottoman Empire. This includes: new interviews with historians and non-historians; new translations of

previously untranslated memoirs and official archival materials from Greek, Turkish, and French; first-time recordings, digitization, and curation of translated written and testimonial and photographic evidence; originally produced digitized maps based on historical maps of the era. It is a **digital ark of memory**, expanding the scope, the content, and technical aspects of all previous narrative treatments of the Phocaea 1914 events towards **a more C21-situated, open-access, and information-rich medium.**

2. It synthesizes these materials in such a way as to entice the reader to interact, discover, cross-check, question, and interpret what's available in multiple ways, **simulating a non-linear, interactive, negotiative "historical researcher" experience for the audience**, something rarely sought in other historical i-docs. The design strategies (and their pitfalls and successes) employed towards this end can provide **a prototype for other i-doc makers** who might wish to construct historical interactive documentaries but might be rather put off by history's "detached", "boring", "didactic", or even "dogmatic" reputation. Similarly, the "historical researcher" user experience of *Phocaea 1914* may equally **inspire historians** to be more open to the digital possibilities of historical research, historiography, and even education in history.
3. It creates **a future testing site** in which follow-up studies can *systematically* test the hypothesis that interactivity and fragmentation do allow for critical appreciation of different readings of a historical event and –why not– encourage open-mindedness and a more tolerant behaviour towards 'the other'.
4. It creates a digital platform that can act as basis for **a future conduit of communication and co-production between Greeks and Turks** –and thus opens up further possibilities for generating and testing out theories of **digital democratization, production democratization,** and even **historical democratization** through bottom-to-top collaborative history projects.

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With an eye on the particular objectives set above (see p. 21), the research I engaged in for this project may be said to fall into six main categories:

1. Reviewing the available literature & locating the idea of *Phocaea 1914* within it
2. Collecting data/ content
3. Designing the i-doc (curating collected data)
4. Tentatively testing the i-doc in order to go back to the drawing board
5. Using the feedback to re-design aspects of the i-doc and digitally build it
6. Re-designing and re-testing the i-doc
7. Ending up with a final (3rd digital) iteration

I turn next to describing the first of these stages.

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CHAPTER 3: LITERATURE REVIEW

Here is a preview of what different sections in the Literature Review chapter deal with:

3.1 Review of available literature on the 1914 events in Phocaea themselves & on how these events fit or did not fit within a larger atmosphere of ethnic and religious violence in the late 19th and early 20th centuries;

3.2 Review of available literature on more traditional historiography and its capacity to accommodate non-linear and interactive historical research, vis-à-vis the tension between the veracity of past events and the subjectivity of interpretation;

3.3 Review of available literature on digital interactivity, non-linearity, and other modes of representation within New Media studies –and specifically in online interactive documentaries;

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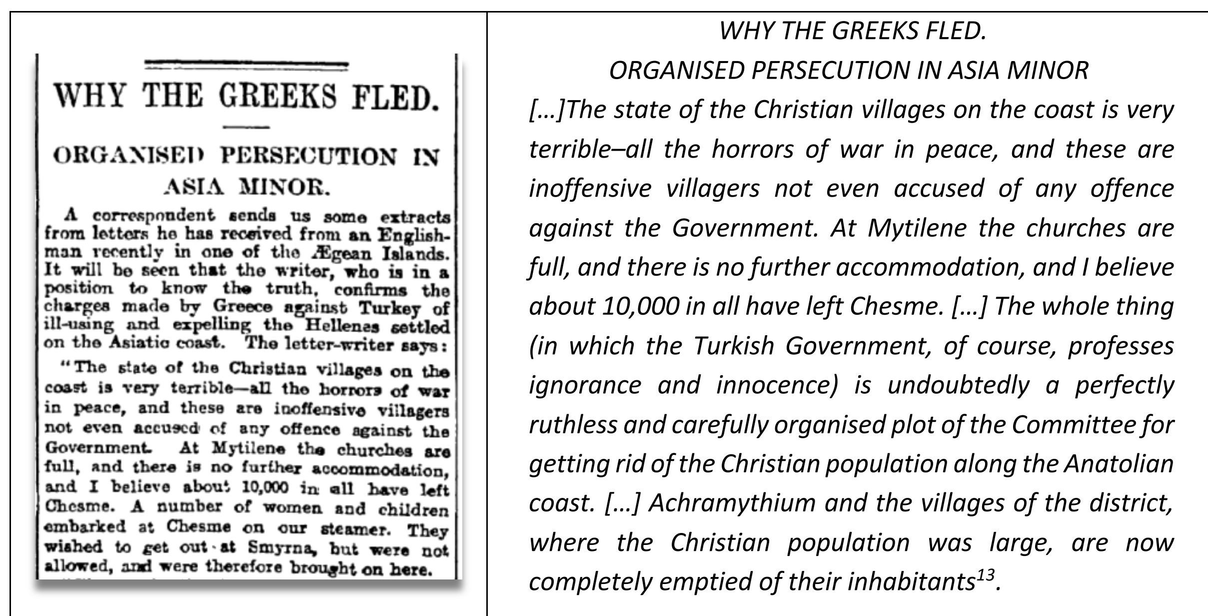
3.1 History: The story of Phocaea in a larger perspective

On page 9 of the *Manchester Guardian*, June 29, 1914, a news item stands out in capital letters: "*Assassination of the Austrian Royal Heir and Wife. Shot by student in Bosnian capital. Two attempts during a procession.*" It was, of course, an event that would change the world: the assassination of the heir presumptive to the Austro-Hungarian throne, which marked a series of quickly escalating military and diplomatic tugs-of-war that would lead Europe, a month later, to the outbreak of WWI[12]. In the southeast corner of Europe, however, a war-like situation had already been unfolding in peacetime. The last page of the same newspaper reports on that same day:



WHY THE GREEKS FLED.

ORGANISED PERSECUTION IN ASIA MINOR.

A correspondent sends us some extracts from letters he has received from an Englishman recently in one of the Ægean Islands. It will be seen that the writer, who is in a position to know the truth, confirms the charges made by Greece against Turkey of ill-using and expelling the Hellenes settled on the Asiatic coast. The letter-writer says:

"The state of the Christian villages on the coast is very terrible—all the horrors of war in peace, and these are inoffensive villagers not even accused of any offence against the Government. At Mytilene the churches are full, and there is no further accommodation, and I believe about 10,000 in all have left Chesme. A number of women and children embarked at Chesme on our steamer. They wished to get out at Smyrna, but were not allowed, and were therefore brought on here.

WHY THE GREEKS FLED.

ORGANISED PERSECUTION IN ASIA MINOR

[…]The state of the Christian villages on the coast is very terrible–all the horrors of war in peace, and these are inoffensive villagers not even accused of any offence against the Government. At Mytilene the churches are full, and there is no further accommodation, and I believe about 10,000 in all have left Chesme. […] The whole thing (in which the Turkish Government, of course, professes ignorance and innocence) is undoubtedly a perfectly ruthless and carefully organised plot of the Committee for getting rid of the Christian population along the Anatolian coast. […] Achramythium and the villages of the district, where the Christian population was large, are now completely emptied of their inhabitants[13].

fig. 5 From the last page of the Manchester Guardian, June 29, 1914

In the previous months newspapers around the world had been similarly reporting on Ottoman Greek populations being targeted along the entire Aegean littoral of Turkey. You can find a rich display of these reports in the *Phocaea 1914* online interactive documentary. The attacks had scared the *Rum* (Ottoman Greek) subjects of the Empire into abandoning their home towns and properties and running away; a sort of forced demographic engineering that was cleansing the area of its Ottoman Greek elements [Bjørnlund 2008].

One of the targeted towns was Old Phocaea, a booming little port town to the north of the cosmopolitan city of Smyrna –today's Izmir. According to one eye-witness report belonging to the French painter Charles Manciet [Yiakoumis 2008: 185-191], who was part of an archaeological excavation team in the area, Phocaea was attacked and plundered for 48 hours during the 12th and 13th of June 1914. By the end of the pillaging, between 50 and 100 people had been murdered, 1,250 houses were left empty, most of the shops were looted and all but a few dozen of its more than 9,000 ethnic Greek inhabitants had fled [Erol 2016; Ecumenical Patriarchate 1919; Sartiaux 1914].

The reasons behind the pogrom can be understood within the contemporary violent struggle for and against the dissolution of the Ottoman Empire. At the time of the attacks, the still multi-ethnic, multi-religious, and multi-cultural Ottoman Empire had been in a continuous state of erosion for more than a century. Having already lost large chunks of its territory to national independence movements forming nascent states in Egypt and the Balkans in the 19th century (Serbia, Montenegro, Greece, Bulgaria), the empire was still struggling with revolutionary autonomist movements within its vast territory (Macedonians, Albanians, Armenians, Arabs, Kurds, Maronites, and Druzes).

The empire had tried to confront such challenges to its territorial integrity through war but also through modernizing reforms that tried to liberalize the state and create a common Ottoman identity for all *millets* in the empire [Kasaba 2008: ch.2-4; Kechriotis 2008]. It didn't work. By the time a nationalist revolutionary movement –headed by Turks this time (the so-called "Young Turks")– overthrew Sultan Abdul Hamid II in 1908, even countries not recently under Ottoman rule had started craving Ottoman lands: Hungary annexed Bosnia-Herzegovina in 1908 and Italy declared war in 1911, eventually gaining the coast of what is now Libya, as well as the Dodecanese islands in the Aegean, which today belong to Greece.

Emboldened by the Ottomans' apparent military incapacity to defend these provinces, the newly independent Balkan states jointly declared war against the Ottomans in 1912, succeeding in prising away the large geographic region of Macedonia, and dividing it among themselves. By the end of 1913, the Ottoman Empire had lost almost all its North African and European provinces –apart from Eastern Thrace– including its islands in the Aegean Sea [Zürcher 2004; Mazower 2002].

But nation-building wars are a bloody business: when borders are violently threatened or changed, uprootings occur. And during the long war years preceding the final collapse of the Ottoman Empire, millions of people belonging to local religious or ethnic minorities were uprooted, expelled,

persecuted, forcefully proselytised, killed, or left to starve, in a widespread frenzy of national homogenization perpetrated by all former Ottoman nation-states to one degree or another [Mazower 2002], in rival acts of (what we recognize as) ethnic cleansing of all against all [Salt 2019; McCarthy 1995; Gingeras 2011]

In the Balkans, hundreds of thousands of Muslims were persecuted, killed or forced to leave their homelands for Turkey. On the Aegean coast of Turkey, hundreds of thousands of non-Muslims met the same fate, heading towards the opposite direction[14].

The successive defeats and massive losses of territories created a monumental existential angst in some of the Young Turks, radicalising their ideology and their agenda: the most extremist among them –members of the governing party *Committee of Union and Progress* (henceforth C.U.P.)– now advocated a 'Turkey for the Turks' [Morgenthau 1918: 32] and the cutting down of all the "internal tumours" that kept threatening the very existence of the empire [Zürcher 2010: 220]. On the ground, this radicalisation translated into economic boycotts against Ottoman Greek businesses, and inflammatory propaganda in nationalist newspapers such as *Türk Yurdu* [Erol 2016; Bjørnlund 2013; Llewellyn-Smith 1999; Kieser 2011], in which the *Rum* citizens of the empire were systematically portrayed as an "ungrateful minority serving foreign interests" [Bayar: 109-110]. In Eastern Anatolia, this same policy of 'Turkification' *(Türkleştirme)* culminated eventually in the genocide of the Armenians and the deportations of the Kurds [Üngör 2011].

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Primarily Ottoman Greek, Phocaea was caught up in this maelstrom of frenetic Turkification-as-a-last-means-of-saving-the-Ottoman-Empire. As mentioned before, what sets it apart from other instances of brutality against Ottoman Greeks is the existence of a photographic record testifying to the persecution and looting that occurred there. Félix Sartiaux, a French engineer and leader of the archaeological team that Charles Manciet was part of, managed to capture the events in a series of stereoscopic images discovered almost a century later by the Greco-French art historian Haris Yiakoumis, and published for the first time in his edited volume *Phocée 1913-1920: le témoignage de Félix Sartiaux* (2008). This makes the event itself indisputable. But it leaves plenty of space for heated debates concerning its *meaning*.

The extent to which such persecutions were carefully organized by the central Ottoman government, for example, is a hotly disputed topic among historians. Few Turkish historians would call them 'orchestrated', even if they accept proof of collaboration between the C.U.P. government and the various irregular groups that ransacked the area [Erol 2016]. Others have no qualms calling them a 'systematic policy' (see for example Llewellyn-Smith 1999:31; Sartiaux 1914; Şeker 2007)[15]. If

not "systematic", the foremost expert on Phocaea's traumatic 1914 history, Turkish historian Emre Erol, calls it "a result of conscious policy" [Erol 2015: 110].

What is widely accepted, however, is that the persecutions in Phocaea –and all along the Aegean coast– were seen by the Ottoman authorities both (i) as a retaliation against the ousting of Muslim populations from Greek Macedonia and Thrace during the Balkan wars [Lieberman 2013, Llewellyn-Smith 1999; Bjørnlund 2013; Erol 2016] and (ii) as a chance of extracting the economy from the hands of a 'foreign-minded' Christian bourgeoisie, which at the time made up around 75% of the internal market [Llewellyn-Smith 1999; Morgenthau 1918; Toynbee 1922; Erol 2016]. Sending the *Rum* away would also (iii) provide empty homes for the incoming Muslim refugees from the Balkans [Sartiaux 1914; Llewellyn-Smith 1999] and (iv) ensure that the Aegean coast of Turkey was not rife with potentially traitorous individuals that could side with Greece if the latter decided to attack the Empire through its newly acquired islands of Lesvos and Chios [Llewellyn-Smith 1999; Erol 2016; Bjørnlund 2013; Sartiaux 1914].

On those motives alone, we can already detect here the makings of any number of narratives banking on binary oppositions:

- For those cosying up to a sense of Greek victimisation, Phocaea is *but* an instance of well-rehearsed genocidal practices in a long list of massacres – stretching from the slaughter of Armenians during the Hamidian era (1894-1896) or in 1909 in Adana, and the violence against the Bulgarians in Thrace in the summer of 1913 [Schaller & Zimmerer 2009], to massive operations of ethnic cleansing against the Greek, Armenian, Assyrian, and Kurdish populations of the empire between 1915 and 1922.
- For those not loath to believing in revenge as a valid means of policy and those distrustful of the loyalty of minorities at times of war, Phocaea was *but* the just retaliation for the massacres of ethnic Turks in the Balkans and the correct way to ensure that potentially traitorous minorities would not try to undermine the empire's territorial integrity from within [Erol 2016: 185,186].

But, of course, the story of Phocaea was both: a relentless pogrom perpetrated with the blessings of an existentially terrified central government against a peaceful minority population, and one of many theatres where an escalating drama of multi-state ethnic cleansing played out, at an era when such violent persecutions were largely seen as fair means of demographic engineering towards the goal of "homogenising" nascent nation-states.

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It would be a great misunderstanding to conclude from the previous discussion that the above-mentioned binary narratives are typical of the existing academic historiography; they aren't. What they are typical of is national curricula and everyday political rhetoric, feeding, inevitably, into popular culture. In the past 30 years there have been conscious, repeated efforts on behalf of Greek

and Turkish academic historians to expose and challenge ethnocentric narratives that occupy this liminal space between Greeks and Turks (see, for example, Frangoudaki & Dragonas 1997, Fortna et al. 2013; Birtek & Dragonas 2005; Lytra 2014; Canefe 2008; Ilıcak 2008; Kamouzis 2020). These efforts, however, have yet to produce palpable changes in national curricula in schools[16] or in the aggressiveness of political rhetoric, often reserved for the domestic audience: "This nationalism ceaselessly calls the population to arms and intransigence because the country is supposed to be surrounded by enemies whose continual endeavour is to oust the Turks from their land" writes Cağlar Keyder about the Turkish paradigm [Keyder 2005: 10], only to be echoed by his Greek colleagues: "The teaching of history in Greek education does not provide pupils with the conceptual tools that would permit them to understand the conflictual historical process and the current social reality. Instead, the school textbooks employ a double standard of value, qualifying the same 'national' characteristics as positive or negative depending on their reference to the Greeks or to other national entities. For example, the expansive national policy of the nineteenth and the twentieth centuries is described as a national right for the Greek state and as the aggressive expansionism of the other Balkan states. The claiming of territories is presented as a right for the Greek state and an aggression for all others. Victory in the battlefield is said to be the consequence of heroism of the Greeks and the result of massacre by any other nationality." [Dragonas, Ersanli, and Frangoudaki 2005: 177-178]

It was a wish to challenge such prevalent, binary narratives that promote animosity, victimisation, and a sense of self-righteousness on either side of the Aegean that made me want to develop an interactive documentary about the 1914 events, an artefact that could strike a balanced and reconciliatory tone without undermining the severity or the traumatic nature of the displacement. I had *already* encountered the complex narratives I needed to use to achieve that: they were present in the work of academic historians, either as referenced archival material, oral histories, or historical interpretations. All I needed to do was bring *that* work –their sources, their debates, their line of thinking, their techniques– or similar, new material, to a larger audience. For it was obvious that the historians had the means of extracting different –complex, 'irreverent'– conclusions than the ones encouraged by schools and popular politics. How? Because they'd been asking a whole different set of questions: who was behind the attacks, but also *why*? What were those perpetrators thinking? How did ordinary Turkish Phocaeans react? What were *they* thinking? In what way was the Kingdom of Greece involved in the fate of the Greek Phocaeans? Whom did the refugees blame and were they right to do so? What do present communities connected to Phocaea think about their collective trauma? Are their recollections ethnocentric too?

In other words, I needed to ask *What Would A Historian Do*? How would s/he go about researching the forced displacement? What sources (primary, secondary, archival, oral) would s/he use? What debates would be triggered and how would s/he go about referencing them against the existing bibliography on Phocaea and the end of the Ottoman Empire? How would s/he fundamentally

challenge the bipolarities *victim vs. perpetrator*, *traitor vs. patriot*, *war-mongering vs. peaceful*, *East vs. West*, without compromising the traumatic nature of the events? And how would answering those questions inform the architecture of an online interactive documentary?

These questions are exhaustively answered in the *Methodology* section of this document, for they concern both the collected content as well as the design of the accompanying i-doc. Before we move onto that section though, we need to ask an even more fundamental question: *can* non-linear interactivity do justice to historical research, or is there something about the veracity of historical facts that disallows meaning-complexity? To answer that we need to ask: have historians used non-linearity and interactivity in the past? To what extent, with what results, and to what cost? It is to these matters that I turn to next.

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3.2 Historiography: Non-linearity and interactivity in historical research

In Orhan Pamuk's 1983 novel *Silent House* (2012), Faruk, an Assistant Professor of History, starts conducting research into the Ottoman archives of the district of Gebze, a small town just outside Istanbul. In the beginning, he is very excited about the untouched little treasure he's discovered. He's looking to fish out a good story that will astound his colleagues back at the university: "the true appeal of history is the pleasure of the story, the power to divert us" he proclaims early on (2012:126).

Little by little, however, he realises that any story he might concoct out of the available material is bound to be partial, as it cannot comprise the entirety of the archive he's found. This becomes a source of increasing anxiety for him: he becomes convinced that setting any kinds of limits to the material –especially turning it into a *good story*– will fundamentally betray its complex, fragmentary nature. He obsessively starts dreaming of writing a limitless book whose goal would be "to encompass, with no attention to the relative value or importance, every piece of information I could discover about Gebze and its environs in the [17th] century… Someone reading my book from cover to cover will, during those weeks and months, end up able to glimpse that cloudlike mass of events that I managed to perceive while working here, and like me he'll murmur excitedly: This is history, this is history and life." He eventually gives up his project, despairing that history can never be expressed in words.

Faruk's conundrum is at the very heart of academic history's struggle with the concept of storytelling: if there are more than one ways of connecting the dots (evidence) and every such dot-connecting exercise involves choices on behalf of those who make information available (authors) and those who interpret information (readers)[17], then these choices –whether to include some dots but not others, whether to connect the dots in *this* way rather than *that*– reveal both authors' and readers' underlying *biases* about the nature of this world. Collecting archives, notes, testimonies, and

photographic evidence, say, and putting it all in a book with an introduction, chapters, and a conclusion –or a film documentary with an inevitable beginning, middle, and end– means to construct a narrative line which inevitably sidelines others: “The choice of narrative must be recognised for what it is: an interpretive act, rather than an innocent attempt at story-telling” [Tosh 2010: 156]. And so it is important, as a historian, to exercise *reflective* analysis on the nature, quality, importance, and impact of their constructed narratives, which cannot but be irreducibly subjective.[18]

How have historians dealt with this inevitable management of evidence and subjectivity at the heart of historical authorship? One way was has been to construct an *histoire totale*: to enrich the description of the past by reference to (non-narrative) *context* [Sharpe 2001: 35]. In other words to list facts about local geography and environment, religious teachings and hierarchies, social mentalities, commercial relations, contemporary technological and communication capacities, the psychology and actions of ordinary individuals in an attempt to study history in an interdisciplinary approach: to employ other disciplines –geography, sociology, economics– even lists of things, to examine and describe the *whole world* in which people lived in the past [Febvre 1912, 1952/1995, 1962]. Such broadening of history’s scope was masterminded by the *Annales* school in France, a historiographical movement initially centred around a historical journal called *Annales d’ histoire sociale et économique*, founded by Marc Bloch and Lucien Febvre back in 1929 [Tosh 2010: 66]. *Histoire totale* was an attempt to counterbalance the inevitability of the historian’s own voice with the sheer volume of reported evidence, allowing for diverging interpretations of events: it was what Orhan Pamuk’s Faruk was trying to do.

How is this in relevant to the *Phocaea 1914* project? It seems to me that the historians of the *Annales* tradition were unwitting forefathers of what we call in digital media a “database architecture”: a collection of individual items that is not sequentially ordered by its author, a storage-like structure with no specific beginning or end, around which the user can perform various operations: view, navigate, search [Manovich 1999]. Multimedia encyclopaedias are databases; social media apps are databases. But so are physical museums, which house entire collections of different kinds of objects, allowing free navigability around their rooms. The value of considering databases lies in making us understand how meaning-making (=narrative coherence) may rest with the user (the museum visitor, the web user, the reader) rather than with the author – i.e. how users, by navigating among the elements of a collection at will, control narrative coherence and hence the informational outcome. Again, not *anything goes*: Manovich does not reject the idea of organising or hierarchising database objects –and historians certainly do not either: libraries, for example, are meticulously organised; so are museum exhibits. But a database, by virtue of existence, highlights the author’s will not to force a point of view onto their audience [Manovich 1999: 85]. Seventy years before Manovich commented on the digital database approach, the *Annales* historians had decided to use it order to escape the limitations of what was at the time the dominant historical practice: reporting only political

and diplomatic events, an "*histoire événementielle"* (an events-led history) [Tosh 2010: 156]. The *Annalistes*, reluctant to give a simple account of events, presented their readers with an all-encompassing multitude of facts, almost encouraging them to "choose their own adventure", as Manovich would put it 70 years later [Manovich 1999][19].

So there is at least one precedent which encourages a non-linear, database-like treatment of history: the *histoire totale* of the *Annales* school. But to what cost?

Not everyone agreed with the database approach to history. Paul Ricœur, for example, raged that doing history by simply listing events was simply impossible; narrativity was part and parcel of all historical texts, by virtue of their being *texts* [Ricœur 1990; Liakos et al. 1993: 221; White 1984: 26]. We can hear Barthes (1977) echoes here, but Ricœur's objection is more fundamental than Barthes': we are all temporal beings (i.e. beings in time) and the only way to understand and express ourselves as temporal is through a composite framework that combines 'cosmological time' (the time kept by our watches) and 'human time' (our personal sense of past, present, and future). The *only* such framework available to us is linear narrative, or as H. Porter Abbott writes, succinctly: "[The]human tendency to insert narrative time into static, immobile scenes seems almost automatic, like a reflex action." [Abbot 2008: 6]. In other words Ricœur (1990) refused to accept that anyone could construct a *temporal* universe just by listing its components[20].

This is a succinct philosophical point but it need not discourage us from looking at digital database-like artefacts in producing and exhibiting historical research; quite the opposite, I argue. For such an artefact would reconcile the need for a holistic understanding of the past (*Annalistes*) with the inevitability of interpretation, as embodied in Ricœur's linear narrative: an interactive (open-ended, non-linear) narrative –the *sum of all possible* trajectories a user could carve through a database– allows for partial, individual trajectories that resemble traditional, linear narratives within its database-like body. The difference (database vs. trajectories) is in the *source* of those two architectures: in i-docs, the source of the "macro" database is the author, and the source of the "micro" trajectory is the user, who chooses her own adventure within the database universe. In this sense, an i-doc may be exactly what the *Annalistes* were trying to achieve: a combination of long-duration *histoire totale*, with a short-duration *histoire événementielle*, with the added bonus of as many individual historical journeys as the users.

But the question, of course, becomes then: is choosing your own adventure *good enough* for historical research?

If you are a trained historian, it clearly is; this is how research is done: by looking at the 'database' of the world –or at a library's informational database– and extracting your own meaning, your own 'story' about specific historical events. Can *anyone* do it, though? If i-docs are informational databases and users partly control the informational outcome by controlling their navigation within

them, is this good enough for History's standards or should we reserve interpretations for the trained historian?

American historian Hayden White (1973, 1980) thought it is, and that we shouldn't: history (as an academic discipline) does not have its own special status in the acquisition of historical knowledge; no more than literature, in any case. Historical facts might be scientifically verifiable but stories about them are *not*. Stories are not something that is found 'out there' in the world; they do not correspond to anything; they are created. *All stories are fictions,* he is most famous for pronouncing (White 1998: 9). Events may have truth-values but they do not have meanings by themselves: *we* assign meaning to them by putting them in an order we think is credible. That order reveals something about us. Writers of history impose meaning on historical data by choice of types of plot –or modes of emplotment (White 1998: 9 & 32)– meaning they build their plots by combining figures of speech, explanatory methods, argumentation, and (unconsciously or consciously) ideologically charged language –the way literary authors do– in ways that reveal their aesthetic, logical, and political choices[21]. In a 'choose your own adventure' type of historical documentary, then, so will readers; and this choice will reveal their ethical, aesthetical, and political prejudices. Whether they will become aware of their prejudices, or whether these will only be apparent to a researcher who might observe the user's progress through an i-doc, is a matter of an empirical usability study. But what we *can* do short of that, is to try and *train* the users into the historian's mindset, i.e. to find some way for them to simulate a historian's methodology. This is exactly what *Phocaea 1914* has been architecturally constructed to do: create choose-your-own-adventure journeys that encourage coming to terms with conflicting interpretations, comparing and contrasting them, cross-checking them with other available primary evidence and secondary literature, etc.

Again, more will be said about this in the *Methodology* section of this document, where both the informational content and the design architecture of the *Phocaea 1914* i-doc will be extensively discussed. But to conclude our present discussion: we asked whether a personalised journey within a digital historical database would accommodate the demands of doing and showcasing history. And the answer lies, in principle, in extrapolating Hayden White's theory of historical narratives as "rhetorical" and "poetic" devices [White 1998: 28; Evans 2000: 100,101; Jablonka 2018] to the digital interactive realm: i-docs don't need historians any more than any other type of documentary or non-fiction writing does –or maybe we should say that they need them *as much as* other representational media, but no more. What they *do* need is authors and users that are as constrained by the veracity of the past as historians are trained to become. And then they can use historians to *critically assess* whether the built artefact merits historical rigor. This does not mean that only historians can curate such artefacts just because the lay users will never have *all* the necessary tools to appreciate a complex representation of reality; it simply means that we need to try harder, to educate and train users and authors in what historians do, and to invite historians to engage with such research, to pinpoint pitfalls

and suggest both content-based and design-based alterations. *Phocaea 1914* was constructed to attempt to simulate the historian's multi-faceted approach via a digital interactive architecture that was built in dialogue with historians from its conception to its final iteration, in order to keep the user, at all times, in touch with the veracity of the past and the potentialities of interpretation. Apart from what will be discussed in the *Methodology* section of this document, further lessons learnt building the i-doc on those two pillars will be presented in the *Reflections & Conclusions* section of this document.

What might a historical narrative database-like artefact look like in the digital world? And what theoretical debates inform its construction? It is to these questions we turn next.

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3.3 Interactive Documentaries: Non-linearity and interactivity

"We are still in the exciting, but somehow chaotic, state of the i-doc cottage industry," writes Sandra Gaudenzi in the 2017 edited volume *i-docs: The Evolving Practices of Interactive Documentary* [Gaudenzi 2017a: 99]. This statement aptly explains *my* chaotic, and often frustrating, attempts at getting to terms with the debates behind the design, logistics, ethics, and impact of the i-doc as a new genre in media. If one considers, in addition, the fact that people who work on i-doc theory come from a great variety of backgrounds and are consequently concerned with different aspects of the form, mapping current debates can become quite nightmarish.

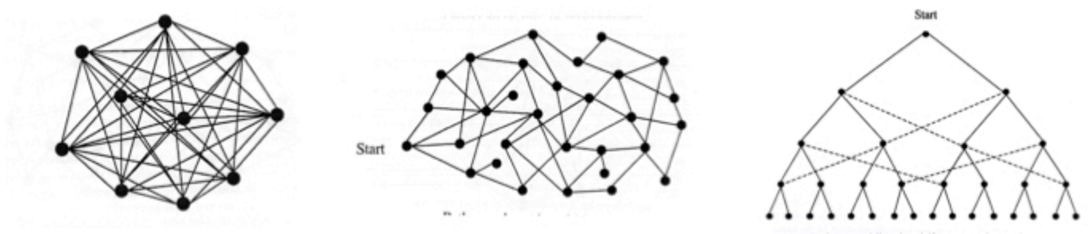
Interactivity is, of course, a prime topic of discussion: literary scholars, such as Marie-Laure Ryan for example, may be concerned with how interactive engagement with a digital artefact may impact on the artefact's narrative structure [Ryan 2001; Yellowless Douglas 2000], echoing the concerns we visited in the previous section –about the metaphysics of narrativity– and whether such a new form is more "poetic" rather than "narrative" [Ryan 2017: 1110]. Hypertext scholar Janet Murray, on the other hand, seems deeply preoccupied with meaning and reception: how new forms of interactive, digital storytelling may prompt us to ask questions about our own lives, the way well-written books do [Murray 1998], touching upon the coveted self-reflexivity we've been discussing as our goal. Then there are the journalists, producers, and filmmakers themselves, such as Katerina Cizek [Wiehl 2018] and Florian Thalhofer [Aston & Gaudenzi 2012], who see i-docs from the perspective of the creator and are, hence, much more interested in how interactivity, non-linearity, and even co-creation disrupt authorial control, engaging essentially in questions of democratization of decision-making [Hudson 2008; Vickers 2011; Wiehl 2018] and political empowerment [Hight 2017; Gaudenzi 2014; Hudson 2020].

Just by looking at the above examples, we can roughly categorize ongoing debates about digital interactive documentaries (or even interactive digital narratives in general) according to focus:

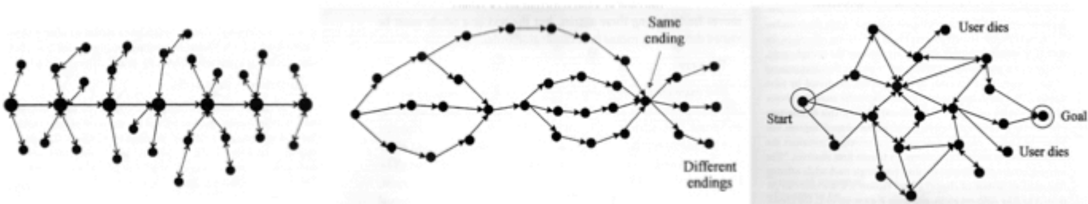
a. debates about the design and aesthetics of the artefact
b. debates about author– and user– control (often morphing into debates about power, politics, and visibility)
c. debates about immersion and self-reflexivity

These are all debates that have informed the construction of *Phocaea 1914*, both content- and architecture-wise and we shall now see where the *Phocaea 1914* can be located with regards to these issues.

In the previous chapter we briefly encountered Lev Manovich's discussion of how a digital database and narrative can coexist in the new media world. Here it is reformulated: "The 'user' of a narrative is traversing a database, following links between its records as established by the database's creator. An interactive narrative […] can then be understood as the sum of multiple trajectories through a database." [Manovich 1999]. What might such an artefact look like? Marie-Laure Ryan (2001) offers an extensive –but by no means exhaustive– index of such possible multidirectional info structures consisting of divergent 'paths' criss-crossing at 'nodes'. For every non-linear architectural structure below –for every type of database, that is– there are multiple ways of navigating about it. The paths that one delineates whilst navigating around the database are the trajectories. These trajectories can be seen essentially as our familiar, linear narratives: each, one among many possible:



(1)The Complete graph structure, (2) The network structure, (3) The Tree structure



(4) The Vector with Side Branches, (5) The Maze structure, (6)The Directed Network,or Flow Chat

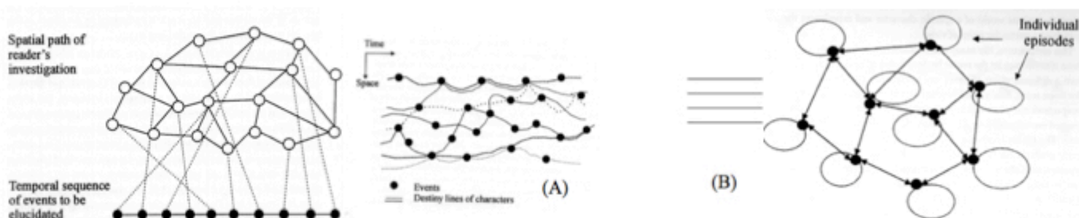


fig. 6 Marie-Laure Ryan's (2001) index of some possible digital architectures

Does this mean that *all* possible trajectories count as narratives? Manovich [1999] thinks not: if a user simply randomly accesses different elements in the database (especially a world-like database, like the Internet itself, or even smaller, grid-like/complete graph databases) there is no reason to think that they will form a narrative at all. But I disagree. Not only because that would completely ignore Ricœur's previously visited theoretical point that, as temporal beings, we have the natural tendency to order discrete pieces of information in a way that creates coherence –whether this ordering is correct or false– but also because from studies of reader responses to hypertext [such as Fitzgibbons 2008 and Protopsaltis & Booki 2005] and of i-doc user responses [Nash 2014; Beattie 2008], we learn again and again that "audience[s] have a 'narrativizing' drive to create coherence" [Nash 2014: 229] and that "reader's choices in navigating a hypertext seek a coherence in the text that meshes with their information goal" [Fitzgibbons 2008: 3].

Why is the drive to narrativize important? Because given that narrative meaning is constructed, as I argued earlier (rather than discovered or imposed), if a user has a strong enough desire to create meaning then one may create meaningful narratives out of any random collection of elements[22]. But *Phocaea 1914* deals with matters which are not fictional and so it must ensure that its users' "narrativizations" can stand up to some degree of historical scrutiny: it matters, for example, that the Phocaea pogrom was ordered on the *false* assumption that the Ottoman Greeks were being trained by the Greek army to "hit the Ottomans in the back" [extract from Eşref Kuşçubaşı's memoir, read in the i-doc] and so Kuşçubaşı's memoir needs to be included in the i-doc in a way that the user can cross-check his testimony against contrasting evidence. Or, it matters that there were indeed secret Greek societies in Istanbul at the time, whose founders often spoke of an Anatolian Greek empire [see historian Dimitri Kamouzis' interview in the i-doc], because their operations partly explain the existential paranoia of the C.U.P. government –and so these two pieces of information need to be linked together for anyone to have some sense of the whole background picture. I, as the author of the i-doc, should not *impose* on the user the sequence *Kuşçubaşı's memoir* → *contrasting evidence*, say, or *Secret Greek society* ←→ *Ottoman government paranoia*, but I can design the i-doc in a way that such narrative links are available and obvious. Hence the *architecture* of the i-doc serves historical rigour in the manner referred to above (p.33), corralling users within a universe carefully designed to constantly attend to the veracity of the past, the way historians are trained to do. So if false narratives and conspiracy theories (like Kuşçubaşı's) exist, they are not silenced, but they are linked to other informational elements that can debunk them. That's where the author's work ends and the user's responsibility in meaning-making starts.

This discussion also answers some widespread complaints in the available literature often directed against i-docs for their "lack [of] a strong narrative voice" [Gifreu-Castells 2011: 357]. If by strong narrative voice one means a director's unalterable, unidirectional point of view, then yes, the

more branching an i-doc is, the less strong its narrative voice; but if by narrative voice one means the creation of intricate databases that offer obvious, easily navigable, multiple choices at most nodes, then I don't see why i-docs cannot have a strong narrative voice –the way a real-life architecture complex, allowing any number of possible trajectories through its open spaces and many buildings, can have a distinctive architectural mark. The narrative voice of an i-doc is the author's mark on the architecture of the database; or as James Pope writes: "the design now *is* the narrative" [Pope 2009 n.p.]. In fact, I believe that a strong narrative (authorial) voice in an i-doc can be recognised when the i-doc has the capacity to train its users to interact in the way the author intended, i.e. through "signature moves", repetitive types of user choices that aim to make an i-doc as navigable as a social media platform, a mentally mappable digital universe whose key functions the user has figured how to access as easily as going from your Facebook Timeline to your profile to your friends' list, to FB Messenger and back[23]. Kate Nash [2014] showed that i-doc users will –initially, at least– interact with an i-doc in ways guided by their previous experience with interactive media (in her reader-response survey on *Bear* 71, she even had users that failed to interact with the documentary *at all*). I would, hence, consider *Phocaea 1914* successful to some degree if its users were to interact with it with ease and in the way I intended them to (i.e. as amateur historical researchers –more on this vision in *Chapter 5*).

So yes, *Phocaea 1914* is such a massively branching, complex narrative architectural structure. whose blueprint you can see in figure 20, page 67 in this document (it looks a bit like ML Ryan's "network structure (2)" combined with the "individual episodes" of sketch (B) above, in fig. 6). Whether its narrative voice is strong or not –do not take my word for it– can be answered through testing. But my general feeling mirrors Gifreu-Castells' comment: if for traditional documentaries non-linear navigability translates to a weak authorial voice, for i-docs "it's pure opportunity" [Gifreu-Castells 2011: 63].

Having located *Phocaea 1914* in terms of design and author-control debates, let's move onto user control/involvement, levels of interactivity, and immersion vs. self-scrutiny.

A minimum necessary condition for digital interactivity seems to be for the user to put in more than cognitive and imaginative reflection and trivial effort (like clicking on a mouse or typing on a keyboard [Aarseth 1997: 1]) – i.e. that "the receiver become transmitter in a way, [leaving] a mark or trace of [her] passage through the work" [Gifreu-Castells 2012]. Yet, apart from accepting this minimum condition, mapping current taxonomies of interaction in the available literature can be frustrating: different scholars suggest different categories depending on which i-docs (and webdocs and transmedia projects) they have looked at, but there is no single way of mapping out levels of interaction.

One of the most comprehensive –and cited– taxonomies is Sandra Gaudenzi's [2013] identification of four different modes of interactivity, based on different levels of agency with regards

to three types of new info-admitting database (closed, semi-open, open): a “conversational” mode where users’ input results in algorithmic changes in the semi-open database; “hypertext” when users open up new spaces within a closed database via hyperlinks; “participative” when users collaborate in some way in the production of the content of the semi-open database; and “experiential” when the interaction simulates real-world/in situ environments. Gaudenzi built her taxonomy on Bill Nichol’s classic grouping of film documentaries according to six “modes of representation, i.e. six basic modes the filmmaker can use to organise reality ” [Nichols 2010]. Leaving aside the fact that it has always struck me as idiosyncratic that Gaudenzi, who has insisted that i-docs are *not* the evolution of film documentaries, chose the syntax of film documentaries to build a syntax for i-docs, her approach does merit a wonderful clarity in describing potential interactive capacities for i-docs, and hence in inspiring authors and designers: a hypertext *Phocaea 1914,* for example, would allow users to explore the totality of the database by ‘choosing their own linear adventure’ within it, whilst a conversational *Phocaea 1914* might, oppositely, provide separate potential scenarios for the user who, by choosing one, might algorithmically ‘close off’ access to the others. (One early idea for *Phocaea 1914*, for example, had been to build it fully in Greek and Turkish and make the users choose which language to use from the get go, then show them evidence that would contradict the national narrative of the country whose language they had chosen. It was partly based on Chen’s *After 6/4* i-doc which pits contradictory view of the Tien An Men events against each other, on the main screen, asking you to choose a perspective –a peaceful revolt or a conspiracy?– and immediately offer the option “Show me Another Perspective”). An experiential *Phocaea 1914,* on the other hand, might offer a more immersive, game-like experience where users would choose avatars –like the French archaeologist Sartiaux, who witnessed the pogrom, or a high-ranking perpetrator like Eşref Kuşçubaşı, who advocated for it– to navigate through the events, read letters, send news, travel, in an altogether more affective experience. A participative *Phocaea 1914,* finally, might allow future users to enrich its content by submitting new evidence and testimonial material, or even re-structure the architecture of the database through collaboration with the author.

The final iteration of *Phocaea 1914* that you can now visit is essentially a hypertext database, in Gaudenzi’s taxonomy: for despite the exciting possibilities that pre-determined scenarios or avatars promised, what was important for me in the end was to emphasize the responsibility that comes with working on a historical subject, the responsibility on behalf of both author and user. If a ‘traditional’, non-interactive documentary is the result of the filmmaker’s active negotiation with reality [Bruzzi 2000] and an interactive documentary is, in addition, the result of the user’s active negotiation – through choice and control– with the reality being portrayed [Aston and Gaudenzi 2012], a *historical* i-doc is, therefore, the result of the *user’s active negotiation with the past*. But again, as I mentioned before but can’t emphasize enough, this negotiation has certain methodological rules that historians mostly apply and politicians often abuse; one of these rules (as we shall see later on) is to look at the

past in as detached manner as possible, without emotional blinkers –so an affective experiential adventure piggybacking on avatars would not do: it would fall prey to Bertold Brecht's criticism of Aristotelian poetics: audience identification with a tragic figure hinders it from seeing the broader social issues at stake[24]. Another rule is to leave no stone unturned: cherry-picking, in other words, is not good historical practice –so a conversational mode with algorithmic 'shut-offs' would not expose the reader to the totality of available evidence and, hence, to their complexity and offsetting interpretations.

But what kinds of user involvement may exist within a "Gaudenzi hypertext mode" database? To explore that –and to locate *Phocaea 1914* among them– let's look at Marie Laure Ryan's taxonomy of user involvement in hypertext environments [Ryan 2005]. Ryan suggests that levels of involvement/interactivity can be sketched like onion layers around a core: the more one proceeds towards the core, the more user involvement the artefact demands. Her taxonomy is created by looking at interactivity on two different axes: (1) where the user stands with regards to the digital environment (inside/outside); and (2) how much effect s/he has on the evolution of the environment (exploratory/ontological). These two axes can be seen as forming the following grid:

<table>
<tr><td rowspan="2"></td><td rowspan="2"></td><td colspan="2">1. Where the user stands w.r.t. the digital environment</td></tr>
<tr><td>External</td><td>Internal</td></tr>
<tr><td rowspan="2">2.
How much effect the user has on the digital environment</td><td>Exploratory</td><td>LEVEL 1
Peripheral Interactivity
e.g. Web 1.0 webpage</td><td>LEVEL 3
Interactivity creating variations in a partly pre-defined story
e.g. computer adventure games</td></tr>
<tr><td>Ontological</td><td>LEVEL 2
Interactivity affecting narrative discourse
e.g. personalised YouTube lists, Web 2.0 apps</td><td>LEVEL 4
Real Time story generation
e.g. VR installations, life-simulation games like The Sims</td></tr>
</table>

fig. 7 A grid-like depiction of Marie Laure Ryan's levels of interactivity, as inspired by [Ryan 2005]

The grid's four types of interactivity map onto the following onion-like schema, in terms of increasing user involvement (more involvement towards the core):

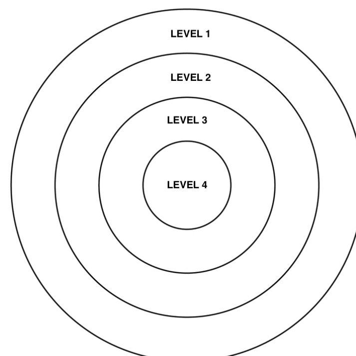


fig. 8 A depiction of Marie Laure Ryan's onion-like taxonomy of interactivity levels

The above taxonomy is rudimentary and admits, I think, many intermediary cases, like the possibility to co-create *Wikipedia* entries whilst outside the digital environment (so something between Levels 2 and 4) an example of what Ryan calls "meta-interactivity": the introduction of new objects and content to the environment through writing code (so, in Gaudenzi's taxonomy, a *deeply* participative type of interaction with the database). But by looking at the grid above, we can say that:

- Level 1 is not really interactivity: navigating around a fixed environment without having any impact on the environment itself is not interactivity. Interaction needs feedback loops to allow users to non-trivially experience different narratives.

- Level 4 is, I believe, too immersive for designing a historical i-doc: as with the case of Gaudenzi's experiential mode above, Level 4 applications (VR / simulation games) are real time story generators [Ryan 2005] which demand a sense of immersion and enactment [Murray 1998] that has great emotional impact ("affective" Gaudenzi calls it). If, as virtual reality therapy has shown, our brains react to VR in the same way we react to reality on at least two levels –emotional response [Kipping, Rodger et al. 2012] and memory acquisition [Segovia & Bailenson 2009]– then VR might be effective in transporting audiences to critical events in history and immersing them in the re-enactment of fear, loss, glory, courage etc., but that would be akin to the sensationalism Thalhofer was raging against at the very beginning of this document! Immersion and enactment are a double edged sword: they can lead to "a self-revealing act that might leave the viewer questioning his or her values" [Murray 1998: 260] *or* they can reinforce ingrained prejudices. Emotionality is a capricious teacher; it is no wonder propaganda is built around it. This is not what I wanted to do in building *Phocaea 1914*; quite the opposite in fact.

- The same immersive hazards can afflict level 3 interactivity: "on this level the user plays the role of a member of the storyworld […] internal participation means that the user has a body, or avatar, in the fictional world […] Internal-exploratory participation is found in those games in which the mission of the player consists of solving a mystery, such as a murder case." [Ryan 2005] Of course there might be authors of historical i-docs who see internal exploratory interactivity as an opportunity: what would have happened, for example, if *Phocaea 1914* was modelled after a digital mystery game like Rusty Lake's *Samsara Room* [2020] –if, in other words, *Phocaea 1914* were a storyworld filled with libraries and state archives and trips to Greece and Turkey, say, and the user assumed the role of an actual historical detective (my role, essentially) that had to look for, collect, and compare evidence like I had? For one, we would be faced with the Brechtian hazard of immersion and sensationalism which we have

been trying to avoid from the get-go. But even if there were ways to circumnavigate that, such an option would involve practical limitations (it would be immensely more costly, time- and expenses-wise) and it would even be an obstacle for the project's projected future life: it would be a *closed* database, a closed storyworld, an unalterable digital ark of memory to which residents of Palaia Fokaia and Eski Foça *would not* have the option of adding any new material in the future. For these reasons, I had to steer away from level 3 interaction.

- Which brings us to level 2 interaction, i.e. interactivity affecting narrative discourse. Does "external ontological" user involvement allow for the possibility of what historians Douglas Seefeldt and William G. Thomas call *digital history scholarship*, i.e. a digital framework that doesn't only permit "people to experience, read, and follow an argument about a major historical problem" but, more importantly, urges them to "investigate interpretive associations of their own" through "a suite of interpretive elements [and] ways to gain leverage on the problem under investigation" [Seefeldt & Thomas, 2009]? Absolutely. Unlike Debra Beattie's *The Wrong Crowd* i-doc, whose purpose was to support "the unfolding of a particular historical argument" [Beattie 2008: 67], *Phocaea 1914*'s purpose was to support the unfolding of contrasting, elliptical, unexpected historical interpretations in the service of one meta-argument: that historical events are open to more than one meaningful interpretation but each such interpretation needs to be cross-checked for veracity of facts and broader historical context coherence. A Ryan level 2 interaction can assume "a form of user-led editing – a storytelling device that facilitates the user creating meaning from the database" [McRoberts 2016: 7] (look at Ryan's two Level 2 structures in figure 9 below) *and* avoid the immersion traps of other levels of interactivity because it "rarely create[s] an emotional resonance with the interactant" [O'Flynn 2012: 147]. In fact, as Jamie McRoberts argues in his analysis of *Gaza/Sderot* (a level 2 hypertext i-doc which juxtaposes Palestinian and Israeli testimonies on the everyday impact of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict), hypertext i-docs can create a whole different kind of emotional resonance akin to "moral responsibility, as [users] engage both physically and cognitively with the contrasting testimonies" [McRoberts 2016: 7]

fig. 9 A "sea anemone" level 2 interactive narrative (L) and a "maze" interactive narrative (R,) from [Ryan 2005]: in the "sea anemone" users can move freely around the database and customize their journey according to their interests, but have to visit individual clusters of nodes (episodes) through single narrative choices via the starting point in the centre; in the a "maze" all nodes can be potentially linked to each other via loops[25]

To summarise: *Phocaea 1914* is a massively branching, looping, and complex interactive database (design-wise) with Gaudenzi hypertext/Ryan Level 2 interactivity (in terms of user involvement), created with a strong interactive narrative voice in mind (in terms of authorial control), but still making space for emotionally detached, non-immersive journeys through contrasting interpretations, in order to achieve Brechtian (or Thalhoferian) self-reflection on the methods and mechanisms behind doing (digital) history scholarship. It was designed to provide ample elbow room in user-based meaning-making, but intends to draw attention to user accountability vis-à-vis historical complexity: with power, they say, comes responsibility; and so *Phocaea 1914* users are encouraged to appreciate the interpretative responsibility embedded in all historical research. How that is achieved through content-choices and design strategies is the topic of the next two chapters on the *Methodology of Research* of this PhD.

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CHAPTER 4: METHODOLOGY OF RESEARCH I – FOCUS & CONTENT

4.1 Historical methodology & focus: Microhistory and Oral Testimonies

As in all disciplines, conducting historical research is subject to well-rehearsed, rigorous, dynamic methodologies. The methodologies are there to ensure that, whatever conclusions someone reaches about a certain set of events, "there is objective truth in history; it may be elusive, but it is usually accessible; and it must always be rigorously pursued." [Brundage 2013: 138]. A historian is "an effective reader, able to retain and process a lot of information, but s/he must be a critical reader, too, to be able to filter our misleading or irrelevant information. Furthermore, a scholar must track down and verify many details, such as basic background information on the authors and primary sources, and to compare previous works of history to understand the state of the art" [Salmi 2021: 30].

In this spirit, I collected my material in a manner that references such practices:

- I collected archival evidence (newspapers, telegrams, memoirs, written testimonies) and interviews (with Greek and Turkish historians/ descendants of Phocaean refugees/ residents of Foça in Turkey)
- I cross-checked them against the available secondary literature on (a) the final decades of the Ottoman Empire, (b) Historiography, Memory, and Oral History
- I identified and highlighted interpretations of the events that push against and/or complemented each other (for the victims: a tale of state-endorsed ethno-religious violence; for the perpetrators: a tale of national existential angst; for the historians: one among other tales of savage uprooting and persecution in era of crumbling empires)
- I created a novel way in which all this research can come together –be curated– in a manner that is novel: i.e. by organizing it in an online interactive documentary.

The focus of this research falls within the methodological realm of **Microhistory**. Briefly put, Microhistory is "the intensive historical investigation of a relatively well defined smaller object, most often a single event" [Magnusson & Szijarto 2013: 4] or "a village community, a group of families, even an individual person" [Ginzburg & Poni 1991: 3]. The point of 'going small' is not to limit ourselves to a particular case study *for the sake* of the case study – quite the opposite: it is to use this clearly delineated object of investigation to answer larger questions and, thus, to provide –if possible– a new perspective on historical investigations that have had larger foci, such as nations, states, whole wars, decades, or even centuries. We do microhistory when we study a single Jewish person's traumatic life

in order to talk about the collective trauma of the Holocaust, as in Rika Benveniste's *Die Überlebenden* [Benveniste 2016]. Or when we compose a detective-like recreation of the trial of a 16th century miller in order to talk about the conflict between oral and written cultures in the era of the Inquisition [Ginzburg 2013].

Microhistory emphasizes individual human agency. People in the past are not puppets of historical powers beyond their control; to the extent that they are confronted with historical events, they have the power to choose to resist or comply, assist, walk out, inspire or subjugate others –in short, to do all the things that we feel we can do as free agents in our everyday lives. It is only retrospectively that historians have felt the need to confine ordinary, willed actions to larger, often teleological, narratives, which talk about 'nations', 'classes', and other categories as stable identities and players in a grand narrative [Tosh: 267-8]. Microhistory, with its "meticulous attention to human interaction on the micro-scale, preserves the agency of ordinary people"[Gregory 1999]. In the case of Phocaea, for example, it can therefore zoom in on the gendarmes of Phocaea and ask why it is that they failed to provide assistance to the fleeing Ottoman Greeks; or inquire why the French archaeologists rushed to do the exact opposite. In the memoirs of those who ordered the displacement, we can see the logic of reciprocity in international relations being actively taken up by some individuals but not others [Bayar 2019; Emmanuelidi 1924]. And, again, we can ask why some individuals fell prey to violence-instigating propaganda but others didn't; why some individuals went beyond the call of duty in persecuting –or rescuing– others; and why a lot of Greek Phocaeans and Turkish Foçalıs are actively promoting rapprochement, contrary to their countries' every-now-and-then flaring belligerent rhetoric. This level of psychological detail cannot be handled by grand historical narratives. Nor can it be boxed into the explicatory mechanisms of Marxist historicism, say. It is telling, for example, that Dr Emre Erol's monograph on Phocaea [Erol 2016] –the most painstakingly researched and detailed account of the events– started out as a Marxist exploration of the trajectory of Old Phocaea as a booming port town powered by salt workers, only for Erol to discover the 1914 events along the way and to realise that the dichotomy between perpetrators and victims could no longer be seen in Marxist terms: "I disagree with the dichotomy which states that 'we the people' are mere passive receivers of the policies of 'they the statesmen'. Policies do find willing executioners or dissidents who bargain with global forces (historical actors of high power) and contribute to the ways in which the final outcomes of policies are shaped." [Erol 2016: 6]

It is for this reason that the material collected and curated for the *Phocaea 1914* is partly made up of written memoirs, photographs, letters, telegrams, parliamentary exchanges and dispatches referring directly to the events of June 12-13, 1914.

It is also, however, made up of **oral testimonies**: the oral histories of eye witnesses of the 1914 events, but also video interviews with living Greeks and Turks who are connected genealogically, geographically, or emotionally to Phocaea. Oral testimonies are a type of material that ties well with

Microhistory's preoccupation with human agency, but had been dismissed for a long time by traditional historiography as supposedly unreliable: oral testimonies, it was argued, were contingent on fallible memories and unconscious biases [Hobsbawm 1997] and were often non-representative of the wider population [Summerfield 2016].

Of course the practice of collecting first-person interviews as data about the past has been around since Herodotus and Thucydides relied on cross-checking their oral sources to compose their respective *Histories*. But the first systematic historiographical methods –developed during the 19th century, at a time of nation-building, when nations needed official, dominant narratives with which to construct their "imagined communities" [Anderson 1983]– banished ordinary people's complex and often contradictory lived experiences from the production of vital historical knowledge [Thomson 2000]. It was only during the second half of the C20 that historians turned to look at what the anonymous crowds had to say, and conduct 'history from below'[26], understanding that the expert historian's voice was of course important, "but so too are the voices of the past which the historian is trying to transmit" [Evans 200: 109]. Recording the testimonies of ordinary, living people with personal experience of historically significant events –in other words, this practice of oral history[27]– came to be seen as a democratic, authentic, and honest alternative to traditional historiography: *democratic,* because it offered ordinary people "not only a place in history, but a role in the production of historical knowledge with important political implications" [Tosh 2010: 319]; *authentic*, because it could bring the past to life by tapping into human life as it was actually experienced, first-hand [Passerini, 1987]; and *honest*, because the practice of oral history looks at social indications other than content: it allows the recording of doubt, texture and timbre of voice, hesitancy, facial expressions, laughter –in other words, things that might not be obvious on paper (and in times past used to be rejected as informational sources) but reveal much about the impact of the story on the informant/interviewee [Thomson 2000 & Passerini 1987].

What all this comes down to is that oral testimonies are more telling of the *teller* than the *tale*, more telling of the *now* than the *then*, a phenomenological recording not of facts but of subjectivity [Tosh 2010; White 1978; Cave & Sloan: 2014]. But that is exactly why they are fitting to the *Phocaea 1914* project: *Phocaea 1914* isn't an i-doc that tries to make a specific historical argument; its purpose is to investigate and explore arguments made about the events. In this light, collecting testimonies from people who themselves, or whose families, were affected by the 1914 events was a way to explore the special place these events may hold within those families and communities: their traumatic legacy, so to speak.

Apart from written archival material with a Micro- focus and oral testimonies, *Phocaea 1914* also includes interviews with Greek and Turkish historians who specialise in the story of Phocaea, the history of the late Ottoman Empire, and historiography. These historians were well versed in Microhistory and could explain the researcher's need for constant oscillation between a Micro- and a

Macro- focus. Their interviews attest to the fact that not only is the persecution of the Greek Phocaeans illuminated in the context of a larger theatre of violent demographic displacements during the Empire's long collapse, but also *illuminates back* any discussions of this context: asking questions about Phocaea illustrates, for example, the larger point that nation-building and violence are intimately related; but it also highlights the ethnic and/or religious nature of that violence and even throws up super-focused questions as to why, say, some of the Greek Phocaeans' previously friendly neighbours, turned pillaging opportunists.

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4.2 Content

The content of the *Phocaea 1914* interactive documentary includes material that falls under two distinct production categories: (a) **Originally produced content** and (b) **Curated archival content**. The way it was put together –i.e. the philosophy behind its curation– seeks to encourage critical self-reflection, similarly to how "in teaching undergraduate and graduate students alike, university historians' primary aim is to get them to adopt a critical and questioning attitude to the books and articles they read" [Evans 2000: 108]. It shall be analysed in the next chapter, *Methodology of Research II: i-doc Rationale and Design*. What follows is a list and brief justification of all the available materials collected and curated.

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4.2.1 Collected and curated archival material

I sought to collect archival material that could illuminate different sides to the same story: eye-witness testimonies of the events from both locals and visitors, reactions from officials on both sides of the divide (Ottoman officials and officials from the Kingdom of Greece), and commentary from parties that were not either from Greece or Ottoman Turkey. The *Phocaea 1914* now includes:

1. Eye-witness testimonies & photographs from Félix Sartiaux and Charles Manciet, members of the French archaeological team excavating in the vicinity of Old Phocaea when the *çetes* arrived (reproduced from Sartiaux 1914 and Yiakoumis 2008)
2. Written eye-witness testimonies by "Mammy" Maroudis and her daughter Anna Kindyni-Maroudis, from New Phocaea, entrusted to Ms. Zacharo Frantzeskou and cordially granted for use in this i-doc. Never before published.
3. Oral testimonies by residents Yiorgos Tzitziras & Thanassis Papoutsis (Old Phocaea); Despoina Pepa & Vangelis Diniakos (New Phocaea); Nikos Vroutanis & Yiorgos Savvas (Çakmlaklı); and Anastasis Haranis (Gerenköy) – all courteously provided by the Centre of Asia Minor Studies,

a trove of more than 5,000 testimonies from Ottoman Greek refugees collected in the 50s and the 60s all around Greece.

4. A series of telegrams sent to the Greek Ministry of Foreign Affairs by Greek consuls in Smyrna (Izmir), Vurla (Urla), Manisa, Ayvalık, and Bursa, and by the Governor General of the island of Lesvos, detailing the oustings along the entire Aegean coast of Turkey, and photographically reproduced here via the Greek MFA's digital archives.
5. Excerpts from memoirs by Celal Bayar (head of the Smyrna branch of the ruling C.U.P. party) and Eşref Kuşçubaşı (high-ranking officer in the C.U.P.'s paramilitary organisation *Teşkilât-ı Mahsûsa*) who were directly involved in the conception and execution of the 'Turkification' policies in Western Anatolia, reproduced from Bayar's autobiography *Ben De Yazdim* [Bayar 2019]. Never before translated from Turkish.
6. A telegram by Minister of Interior (and "architect of genocide" [Kieser 2018]) Talaat Pasha back to his Ministry in Istanbul, after his personal visit to Old Phocaea, in which he reports that all the Ottoman Greeks have fled. Reproduced from [Erol 2016:176-177] in Erol's own translation – the original is in Ottoman Turkish which I cannot, unfortunately, read.
7. A heated exchange between Talaat Pasha and the Member of Parliament from Aydın (the province to which Phocaea belonged) Emmanuel Emmanuelidi, in the July 6, 1914 (23 Haziran 1330) official records of the Ottoman Chamber of Deputies, again in Emre Erol's translation from Ottoman Turkish [Erol 2016 :182-186]. Note that both Emmanuelidi and Talaat were members of the Committee of Union and Progress party.
8. A short excerpt from the memoir of Emmanuel Emmanuelidi himself, reproduced from its original 1924 edition [Emannuelidi 1924: 62-63]. Never before translated from Greek.
9. A plethora of newspaper articles reporting on the massacres – among them articles from *The New York Times, the Manchester Guardian*, *The Times of London, The Atlanta Constitution*, etc.

(Most of the aforementioned material was voiced and recorded by friends (some of whom happened to be actors), in four different languages (English, French, Turkish, and Greek) and then turned into a rich video or sound & text experience. The Turkish text was read by professional actors, as the language used is somewhat antiquated and needs specific intonations to make sense. I was equally helped by friends in double-checking my Turkish translations.)

I would have liked to be able to reproduce the oral testimonies (or the transcripts of the oral testimonies) of the Turkish residents of Phocaea who witnessed the pogrom back in 1914, but I can't. Engin Berber, the historian who collected the testimonies as part of a different project (recording the oral history of the Greek occupation of Western Anatolia, 1919-1922) would not release them to anyone whose narrative he perceives as "anti-Turkish". Historian Emre Erol got to listen to them as

part of his PhD research, for his own thesis on the 1914 ousting, but was prohibited from reproducing them. Berber has forbidden him to share the material with anyone else since then.

I would have also liked to be able to reproduce pictorial evidence of non-Greek diplomats' dispatches from Istanbul and Smyrna to their respective ministries in Britain and Denmark concerning the events:

(a) dispatches from Sir Henry H.D. Beaumont, Secretary of the British Embassy in Constantinople, held today at the Foreign Office archive and reproduced in Erol [2016 :179-180] ; and

(b) dispatches from Alfred Van der Zee, Danish consul at Smyrna –which can be found in the archives of the Danish Foreign Office, the *Udenrigsministeriet* [Bjørnlund 2008].

Unfortunately, the Foreign Office records are not available online (one must travel to the National Archives at Kew to look at them in person) and the same stands for the *Udenrigsministeriet* records, only available to researchers who visit Copenhagen. Having been stranded in Athens, Greece since March 2020 due to Covid-related international travel restrictions, it was impossible for me to access either archive. At a later time, maybe evidence from these two sources might get to enrich the content of the i-doc.

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4.2.2 Originally produced material: Process – semi-structured interviews with open-ended questions

Phocaea 1914 contains video interviews that were filmed, and/or edited and subtitled originally for this project. We filmed in both Turkey and Greece, and gathered material from:

- residents of Palaia Fokaia in Greece (descendants of the Ottoman Greek refugees of Phocaea)
- current residents of Eski and Yeni Foça in Turkey
- Greek and Turkish expert historians

I felt compelled to conduct these interviews because archival evidence and references to secondary literature were not enough to build *Phocaea 1914* on: *Phocaea 1914* is not an i-doc that strictly seeks to establish facts; its purpose is to allow the user to juxtapose evidence with interpretations and historical analyses as part of a much bigger exploratory tableau. The mini video interviews with relevant Greeks and Turks were thus conducted for the user to witness how the 1914 pogrom is perceived two generations down the line. I wanted to find out what the impact of the events has been and I trusted the people themselves to tell me.

For this reason the interviewees were encouraged to provide answers "in their own terms or in a manner that reflects [their] own perceptions rather than those of the researcher" [Lewis-Back,

Bryman & Liao 2011: 767]. This is exactly the kind of goal semi-structured interviews with open-ended questions seek to achieve. I therefore planned my interviews accordingly: I had an initial list of questions I wanted answered (For the Greeks: "Who first talked to you about the 1914 events?"; "Have you been back to visit Phocaea/Foça in Turkey?" / For the Turks: "What is your family history?"; "Do you know stories from the days of the coexistence of Greeks and Turks in Foça?"; " Have you heard of the 1914 events? How did you find out about them?") but I also felt free to ask about additional topics that came up during the conversation [Lewis-Back, Bryman & Liao 2011: 1095] and which (a) allowed interviewees to express themselves in their own words; (b) indicated their level of information; (c) highlighted what was salient in their minds; (d) revealed their feelings; and (e) allowed complex motivational influences and frames of reference to be identified [Foddy 1994].

I am aware of the objections that challenge these five assumptions behind the practice of open-ended interviews [see for e.g. Schuman &Presser 1981; Henry 1971; Foddy 1994], suggesting for example that interviewees often avoid answering sensitive questions even if they do know the answer, or that some topics are so salient to them that they appear too obvious to merit a mention, or –when it comes to asking them about their personal motives– that people are often influenced by factors they are not even aware [Foddy 1994: 133]. But the problem of unconscious motives, for example, is a feature of all human experience and plagues even the physical sciences [Kuhn 1962], so it shouldn't stop us from asking questions –just maybe the question 'why' [Henry 1917]. And the sensitive or (unexpected) threatening nature of a question can be tackled with building trust and/or with recording the hesitant reaction. *Phocaea 1914* interviews, for example, were exclusively face-to-face interviews, recorder on video, in an effort to earn the interviewees' trust by meeting them on the same level and to capture any emotional response generated: some interviewees cried in front of the camera, indicating high levels of trust and emotional responsiveness; others, after answering the initial questions I posed, insisted on speaking extensively about things I had not asked them about, generating "unanticipated accounts of response categories" [James Fray in Lewis-Back, Bryman & Liao 2011: 767].

All in all, as Fowler suggests, most of the difficulties and theoretical reluctances towards open-ended interviews can be overcome "by adding some structure or limits to responses" [Fowler 1995], which is what happened during the filming of the *Phocaea 1914* interviews: having established some degree of trust with the interviewees (explaining their right of withdrawal from the interview at any time during or after, and signing the forms attesting to that, helped a lot with winning their trust), I began by asking specific questions that interested me but also allowed them to elaborate on matters they felt were salient. Further reflection on the specific results of this process is to be found in *Chapter 6: Reflections & Conclusions* of this document. This is a deliberate structural choice, as reflecting on the sampling, reliability, validity, limitations, and the content of these interviews opens up possibilities for further interdisciplinary study, which is identified and highlighted in *Chapter 6.*

Here are more details on the specific interviewees sampled:

4.2.2.1 Sample 1: Palaia Fokaia (Greece). Reliability & Limitations

Alas, no Greek Phocaeans who lived through the 1914 events are alive today. When interviewing their descendants I was mainly interested in inquiring about their own knowledge of the events, their parents' memories of the events, and their own sense of identity with respect to the events. The interviews employed some standardised questions ("Who first talked to you about the 1914 events?"; "Have you been back to visit Phocaea/Foça in Turkey?") but were mostly open-ended. The residents of Palaia Fokaia (like many descendants of Asia Minor refugees all over Greece), have established a cultural club, "*Φωκαέων Πολιτεία"* (*The Phocaeans' Polis)* through which they keep the memory of their Ottoman hometown alive by organizing classes and festivities and trips. It is almost impossible to find a descendant of Phocaean refugees in Palaia Fokaia who does not take an interest in activities that connect them to their Ottoman homeland.

The residents of Palaia Fokaia spoke about the 1914 attacks, the 1922 Catastrophe, the hardships the refugees faced when settling in Palaia Fokaia, the trips they themselves took as a community back to Foça, Turkey, to discover their roots, about their parents' relationship with their Turkish neighbours, and about their own ties with current Foça residents. They all have given written and signed consent to be named in the i-doc.

Working with a cluster of people who were already invested in the topic helped establish trust from the get-go. The Palaia Fokaia residents were eager to talk about their connection to Phocaea/Foça. The interviews were conducted over two days, at the cultural club, and the residents provided family photographs, poems, stories, and even some objects that their forefathers had brough from the Ottoman Phocaea when leaving (a local costume, a pan, a sword, an iron, etc.) some of which have been filmed and included in the i-doc.

*

4.2.2.2 Sample 2: Eski & Yeni Foça (Turkey). Reliability & Limitations

I also conducted interviews with current residents of Eski and Yeni Foça. In most, I was assisted in my Turkish by Dr Emre Erol of Sabancı University –originally from Eski Foça himself– author of the definitive academic monograph of the 1914 events in Phocaea [Erol 2016]. It was he who introduced me to Eski Foça residents who, like the Greek residents of Palaia Fokaia, seemed to have a sense of their town's traumatic history. Their knowledge stems primarily from certain public events that have been organised in the past 20 years: the launch of Haris Yiakoumis' book of Félix Sartiaux' photographs

[Yiakoumis 2008] and some historical symposia whose addresses were transmitted live on the local TV channel.

Of the residents I asked some structured questions, trying initially to probe this knowledge ("Have you heard of the 1914 events?"; "How did you find out about them?"; "Do you know of any other stories from the days when Greeks and Turks coexisted in Foça?") and then allowed them to elaborate on what they thought was salient. Each had a different topic of special interest: one resident was fascinated by the Ottoman Greek architectural legacy of the town, another by the long history of Greeks in the aera since the ancient times; a few focused on stories about Turkish refugees or exchangees from the Balkans (often, their own family), providing a very interesting counterbalance to the Greek refugee story. There were also those who spoke of the Turks as victims in the hands of Armenians and Greeks: again, a valuable counter-narrative to the official Greek victimization accounts.

Not wanting to have a skewed idea of what the local Turks knew about the past (since the Eski Foça residents were invited to be interviewed by Dr Emre Erol, after all, and so had some sense of the topic of the interviews), I deliberately drove to Yeni Foça to collect interviews from people who have not been exposed to cultural events and public discourse pertaining to local Greco-Turkish relations. In Yeni Foça, we collected interviews from random people on the street who were willing to speak to us despite my halting Turkish. This decision was not based on convenience. It was a purposeful choice in order to discover what "non-targeted" residents might know or think about the Ottoman Greeks that once lived in their homes, and in order to get a grasp of their sense of Yeni Foça's Greek past.

I asked, again, some standard questions first ("Do you know if there were any Greeks living in this area before?"; "When did your family arrive here and how did they establish themselves in this town?") and thereafter allowed the interviewees to take the interview towards what they deemed I should hear most. I am aware that this method might have picked out unrepresentative specimens of the local population (a standard objection to conducting Oral History, as was mentioned earlier), but I wanted to add an extra, more granular layer to the story, to add colour, and get a better grasp of the locals' feelings without a Turkish intermediary facilitating questions of trust or content.

The result was revelatory: the two interviewees turned out to be from Muslim families originally from Greece (Thessaloniki and Kavala) and had their own traumatic stories to tell[28]. Their testimonies are subjective and limited, but that's exactly how they are treated: no part of this project relied on a survey-like attempt to extrapolate from a few samples; all testimonies are singular and supposed to be compared and contrasted to other testimonies, archival evidence, and historical interpretations, and so fit well the purpose and philosophy of this project.

As with the Greek residents of Palaia Fokaia, all Turkish residents of Eski and Yeni Foça who were interviewed for *Phocaea 1914* have given written and signed permission to be named in the i-doc.

*

4.2.2.3 Sample 3: Greek and Turkish historians (Greece & Turkey). Reliability, Limitations, Validity.

It was of utmost importance to me to conduct video interviews with expert historians from either side of the Greek/Turkish divide, who –apart from summarizing for the audience what I'd found out during my bibliographical research– could also offer a sense of the conflicting interpretations surrounding the events, comment on the national narratives that piggyback on bipolar sensationalism, and –on a meta-level– discuss the business of doing history, the tension between objectivity & subjectivity, the play between Microhistory and grand historical narratives, the challenges of working with testimonies, and the way memory might play a part in shaping stories about past events.

Obviously, even in the cases of academic experts, qualitative method interviewing includes the possibility of bias –both mine and theirs– especially at a time when the political context of being an academic in Turkey is charged. The question of trust assumed here an even greater relevance than in the interviews with the non-academic respondents: I worked on getting a meeting with Dr Emre Erol (the primary authority on the Phocaea story and my gateway to almost all other Turkish interviewees) for about two years before I was granted a tentative hearing in his office in Istanbul. Dr Erol was at first hesitant to share any information other than what he'd already published, but through repeated meetings in Istanbul and Athens, he warmed to the possibility of appearing in front of the camera and he convinced two more of his colleagues to do so as well. Looking back at it, and in the context of the current clampdown on academic free speech in Turkey, all three showed great courage when consenting to be filmed whilst speaking of things and in terms that the official Turkish state does not recognise or endorse (the Armenian genocide, the legal status of the Eastern Aegean Greek islands, the deliberate concealment of responsibility for the 1914 pogroms, etc.) If their testimonies are to be considered subjective in any way, this does not compromise the goal of the current project at all: the point is to understand that what an interviewee expresses is an event in itself, open to scrutiny. This is part of the basic philosophy behind *Phocaea 1914.*

The same goes for the Greek historians who were interviewed for this i-doc, of course, even though the stakes in their contradicting accepted narratives of repeated victimisation are far lower than their Turkish colleagues'.

The historians interviewed for *Phocaea 1914* and appearing on camera are:

- Prof. Fikret Adanır, Emeritus Professor of Ottoman History at Bochum University (Germany) and Sabancı University (Turkey)
- Dr Emre Erol, Historian at Sabancı University (Turkey), specializing in comparative Greek and Turkish history and the history of Phocaea/Foça
- Dr Efi Gazi, Assistant Professor of History at the University of the Peloponnese (Greece), specializing in Public History, Oral History, and theories of Historiography

- Dr Dimitris Kamouzis, Historian & Principal Researcher in the Centre for Asia Minor Studies (Greece), specializing in the history of Ottoman Greeks
- Dr Oktay Özel, Historian at Bilkent University (Turkey), specializing in the politics of demographic engineering in early modern Ottoman history

I am delighted to say that they all brought an incredible richness to the content of the i-doc. By navigating through their interviews the user can:

a. get a sense of both what happened in Phocaea and how Phocaea fits into a larger picture of violent, antagonistic nationalisms in the crumbling Ottoman Empire;
b. understand the chain of events that led to the pogrom (starting with the Young Turk revolution in 1908);
c. recognize the many ways in which the Committee of Union and Progress and its paramilitary branch, the *Teşkilât-ı Mahsûsa* ("Special Organization") organized and precipitated the "Turkification" of Ottoman society by persecuting its Christian minorities (from economic boycotts, to pogroms, to death marches) under the guise of constant war;
d. appreciate why such a story has not been included in the victorious Turkish national narrative about the end of the Ottoman Empire and the founding of the Republic;
e. appreciate why such a story is overshadowed by the story of the Catastrophe in the Greek national narrative;
f. learn how collective memory and trauma can reinforce such bipolar narratives and how the practice of oral history may play a role in healing such divides;
g. familiarize themselves with the practice of historical research by listening to professional Historians speak about their own archival research.

4.2.3. Overall Validity

To think that any qualitative researcher –even an expert historian– can be non-biased in their work is an illusion: "the modern consensus is that this is impossible", writes Georg G. Iggers in his history of historiography; "[t]he action of picking sources automatically raises bias in a narrative, as choosing to include or exclude any source is an act of subjectivity" [Iggers 2005: 470]. What my interviewees remembered or forgot, and mentioned or avoided mentioning, says something about them. The interviews I conducted and included in the *Phocaea 1914,* says something about *me*: it belies my wish to showcase historical evidence, narratives, and interpretations that are not necessarily compatible with one other. The interviews are minimally edited for background noises and some long silences (most silences have been kept as they, too, are informative) and have been mostly kept in the syntactical order in which the interviewees chose to speak. If what we remember and what we forget, what we expose and what we keep silent, is a political statement, then *Phocaea 1914's* political

statement is: there's value in showing as much complexity as you can, there's value in challenging presented narratives, there's value in offering others the means to do so themselves. "Documentation as a means to construct the 'truth' also finds an expression in the ways in which documentary genres are presented to their audiences, especially in the ways in which they stage the authenticity of the stories they embody" writes Middle Eastern Studies professor Aslı Iğsız, when discussing how personal stories about the past are documented in contemporary Turkey [Iğsız 2008: 462]. It is to the discussion I turn to next: how *Phocaea 1914* stages the authenticity of the stories it embodies, and why.

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CHAPTER 5: METHODOLOGY OF RESEARCH II: i-doc RATIONALE, VISION, AND DESIGN PROCESS

5.1 The challenge: Complexity

The challenge in producing the *Phocaea 1914* i-doc was to take a series of brutal and traumatic events that could easily slip into larger, simplistic, belligerent national narratives, and organise them digitally in a manner that would expose their complexity, the complexity inherent in all our representations of the past.

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5.2 The rationale: Simulating historical research methods

Appreciation of past complexity is the niche of the historian: "Moral, epistemological, and causal complexity distinguish historical thinking from the conception of 'history' held by many non-historians" write Thomas Andrews and Flannery Burke in *What Does it Mean to Think Historically,* the most-visited article on the website of the American Historical Association [Andrews & Burke 2007]. So by identifying the basic steps of a historian's "detective work" and building the i-doc around them, I could make such mechanisms explicit, in a Brechtian attempt towards an "epic" digital interactivity. In a similar manner to Brecht's *episches Theater,* the user of *Phocaea 1914* would be encouraged "to view the way in which playwright and actors presented the tale, exposing the mechanisms of theatre, and promoting an attitude of curiosity rather than the emotional and empathic response to the acting" [Gordon 2017 n.p.]. Or, as Belgian artist Thomas Bellinck says, in a more documentary-focused parlance, about his series of interactive in-situ documentaries collectively entitled *Simple as ABC* [2015-2020]: unlike in mainstream documentaries, where "[t]he director who interferes, chooses, creates a framework, erases [but keeps] these mechanisms … hidden, what we try to do is to be as transparent as possible vis-à-vis the devices we use in order to tell our story."[29] It is what we saw Florian Thalhofer also urging documentarists to do, in the beginning of this exegesis.

What are the basic methodological steps behind historical research, then?

(a) Discovering and collecting diverse historical data, whose relevance and veracity are cross-checked by reference to the existing bibliography, must surely come first: "Historians are accustomed to elicit meaning from documents by comparing them with other documents", writes Richard J. Evans [Evans 200: 91]. The previous Methodology chapter on *Focus & Content* was a description of this first step in my own research.

(b) But "what is at issue […] is how historians use documents […] as evidence for establishing the larger patters that connect them […] The whole art of historical research in many cases […] is to

detach documents from the ‘discourse’ of which they formed a part and juxtapose them with qualitatively different others” [Evans 2000: 80 & 82]. Apart from collecting and cross-checking evidence, then, a historian understands that, in order to make sense of a larger picture, one needs to enter the world of interpretation and that there exist divergent interpretations or even systems of interpretations (i.e. grander narratives).

(c) “Moreover, it is obvious that our way of reading a source derives principally from our present-day concerns and from the questions that present day theories and ideas lead us to formulate.” And “[h]istorical writing as well as teaching makes a point of conveying the provisional and uncertain nature of interpretation, and the need to test it constantly against the source materials used as evidence in its favour.” [Evans 2000: 84 & 109] So, not only are there divergent and conflicting interpretations, they are value-laden. And a historian’s task is to highlight such interpretative conflicts in order to bring out the hidden value judgements behind each.

(d) And in doing all this, a historian works towards proposing a way in which their “detective work” might enhance the available historical knowledge: “[W]hat one may call progress in their endeavours comes not merely through the discovery of new materials but at least as much through a *new reading* of materials already available.” [Evans 2000: 84]

And in designing *Phocaea 1914* I tried to build a digital architecture that would simulate these steps, in an exciting way for the user. *Phocaea 1914* users, in other words, as amateur history researchers, can potentially:

- discover diverse evidence (from a large sample of original and curated archival material)
- not miss important information (through UX mechanisms that aid their navigation and which are discussed below)
- cross-check them against the existent historiography (by listening to historians locating the story of Phocaea within the existent historiographic framework)
- discover conflicting interpretations of the events (through both historians’ interviews as well as eye-witness testimonies and memories from both perpetrators and victims)
- understand how these interpretations push against each other and where their bias might stem from (again, through both historians’ interviews as well as eye-witness testimonies and memories from both perpetrators and victims)
- begin to appreciate how a historical researcher works in untangling such biases (by listening to historians speak about their own work and research experience)
- feel excited about this journey of historical discovery (by applying UX heuristic principles – discussed below– design to make a user journey exciting)

In other words, I have tried to build an exciting digital interactive documentary experience that simulates the work done by a historical researcher, with the aim of encouraging the user to become more conscious about their own consumption, understanding, interpretation, and synthesis of

historical empirical evidence –in the same way historians, “by making their own preconceptions and purposes explicit, […] have customarily tried to provide readers with the knowledge to read their books against their own intentions if so desired.” [Evans 2000: 108] If this is indeed the case –meaning, if these potential effects are evinced by a future systematized survey– then I don’t see why *Phocaea 1914* cannot also work as a platform for teaching the mechanisms of history as well: after all, “university historians’ primary aim is to get [their students] to adopt a critical and questioning attitude” [Evans 2000: 108].

*

5.3 The vision: An authoritative and lucid ‘historical detective’ UX

This larger, reflective rationale behind designing a **historical detective user experience (UX)** had suggested what *Phocaea 1914* might look like even before shooting and/or collecting any audio-visual material in Turkey and Greece. Aesthetics-wise, for example, I felt it needed to convey **authority to some degree, without being too pedantic**. After all, its primary audience would be people interested in Phocaea’s story but also in the history of Greco-Turkish relations in general. Archival documents and photographs in the content would do, but there also needed to be some sort of constant reminder that this was a journey into history and into two different countries. I hence decided to have as a constant background historical maps that would juxtapose Greece to Turkey and Now to Then. This would also immediately convey the idea that there are at least four different areas the user could explore: two different countries, past and present. At the same time, the user journey that would take place on this “cross” of areas needed to be **lucid –easily navigable and user friendly–** (see a thorough discussion of why ease of navigability and user-friendliness are important in the next section, *5.4: The design process*) and to incorporate a mechanism that would simulate how historians cross-check new findings against available literature: a whole different level of juxtaposition, akin to “going to the encyclopaedia” or “going to the library to check” in older days.

In the end, the *Phocaea 1914* design evolved through three different digital iterations, incorporating different degrees of complexity and freedom for user navigation and calibrating/curating the user’s experience of available journeys through trial and error mechanisms that will be exhibited in the present chapter. But the paper prototype it began with, the first materialisation of the above rationale and vision, was the following:

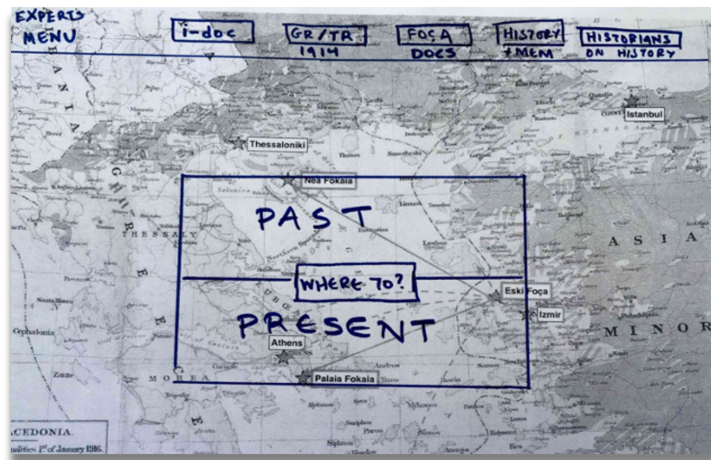

fig.10 Paper Prototype Homepage

This simple design exposed the user to the following possible range of materials:

What?	*Where?*
Material connected to the past [eye-witness testimonies from 1914]	PAST
Material connected to the present [oral history interviews with Greeks and Turks now]	PRESENT
Material 'outside' the past and present, i.e. reference material [archival material & interviews with historians]	EXPERTS' MENU

- The homepage informs the user that there are at least two ways of going about the story: either through the PAST, or through the PRESENT – i.e. there is no one point of entry, something which allows me not to force a point of view onto the audience [Aston & Gaudenzi 2012:133]
- It includes a top menu which –like all top menus– stays constant and therefore serve as *cross-reference* to the material (testimonies and interviews) available in the PAST and PRESENT "universes", THE EXPERTS' MENU

Moreover, if one entered via the PAST, one would immediately be exposed to testimonies from 1914:

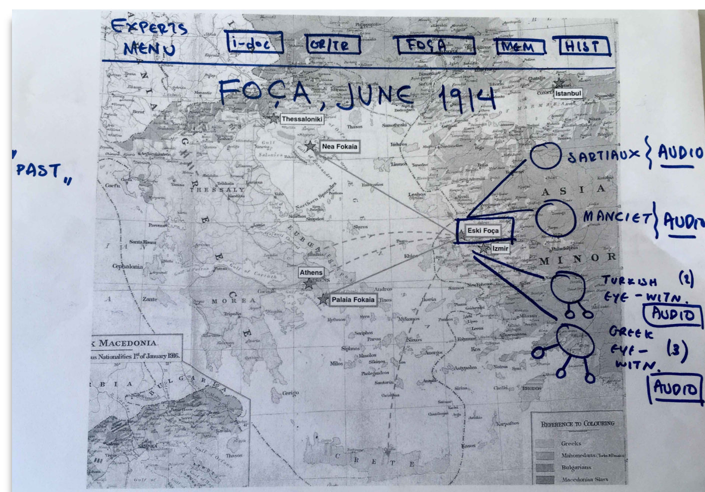

fig. 11 Paper Prototype: Past

And if one clicked on PRESENT, they'd see current interviews from Palaia &Nea Fokaia, and Eski Foça:

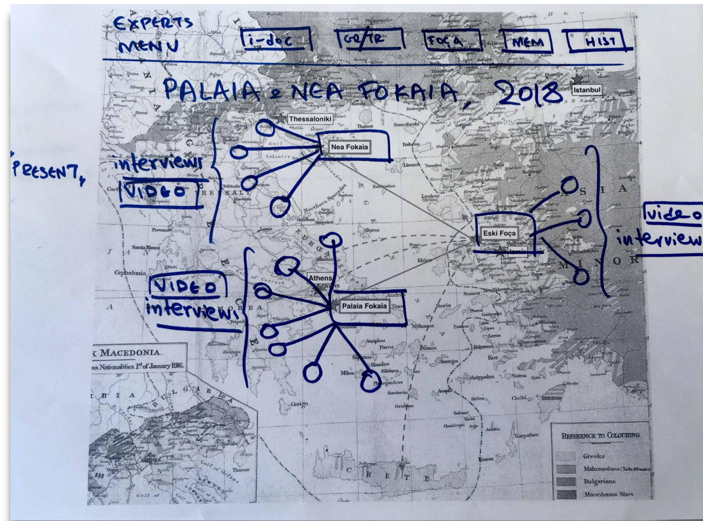

fig.12 Paper Prototype: Present

- Immediately we're faced with a second axis of juxtaposition –in addition to the chronological split of the homepage (Past vs. Present): a geographical/cultural split, with different points of entry (Palaia Fokaia/ Nea Fokaia vs. Eski Foça).

These multiple dichotomies belie the idea that historical events resonate differently with people of different backgrounds. In other words: do not expect to be told simply what's happened and why; people with different backgrounds might entertain different views about the events; it is up to you to piece together the evidence and arrive at your own conclusions. This type of thinking first attracted my attention when I encountered ARTE's webdoc *Gaza/Sderot: life in spite of everything* [Lotz, Ronez et al. 2009], which juxtaposes the views of Palestinians living in Gaza with those of Israeli inhabitants of Sderot about the difficulties of co-existence in one of the world's most traumatized locations. *Gaza/Sderot* is designed with "a divisional interface [that] forces the user to make comparisons […] in such a way that comparisons are drawn on a more humanistic level where the personal is political and the stories can often show us connection, not solely juxtaposition or difference. The principles of constructive storytelling align with *Gaza/Sderot* in the sense that mutual recognition does not imply a universal understanding of identity, but articulates cultural difference" [McRoberts 2016: 7]. In other words *Gaza/Sderot* conveyed that there is no right or wrong way of seeing the Palestinian-Israeli conflict from the ground and that, often, different POVs can encourage greater understanding.

Similarly, *Phocaea 1914* lays bare the different interpretations that might be latent in Greeks' and Turks' perception of Greco-Turkish coexistence. But because it is a historical i-doc, it needs an extra layer of scrutiny, a way to coral information into the veridical and the non-veridical. As the author, I was not only responsible for empowering the user to actively interpret available empirical facts; I was also responsible *to* the facts themselves. It is for this reason that I came up with the idea

of a permanent top menu called “The Experts’ Menu”, whose name and layout was supposed to convey the fact that it included interviews with historians and archival material, and was therefore the go-to place for cross-referencing past testimonies and present interviews:

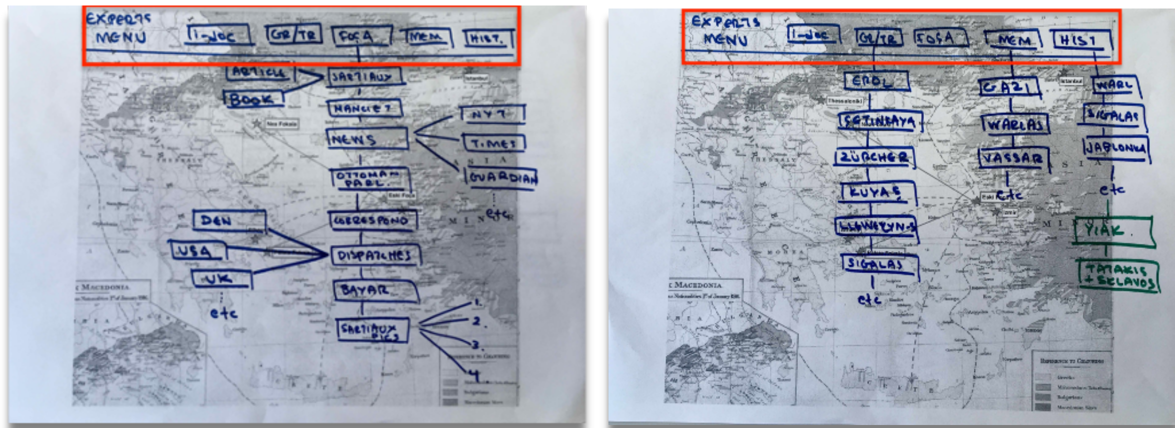

fig. 13 Paper Prototype. The Experts’ Menu

- The permanently present top EXPERTS’ MENU would include newspapers articles, diplomatic dispatches, and Ottoman Parliamentary papers related to the 1914 events, as well as interviews with Greek and Turkish historians on the events and meta-discussions on history, memory, historiography etc.

This was the vision behind *Phocaea 1914’*s first (paper) prototype which the web designer and I tried to transfer online. The rest of the chapter expands on these efforts.

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5.4 The design process: Iterative usability testing informing successive digital iterations

In one of the few evaluations of i-doc design protypes in the available literature, Ramona Pringle discusses the importance for the i-doc creator of assessing “the extent to which a topic can be made engaging, thought-provoking, or novel through the unique approach to execution” [Pringle 2017: 149]. Of course i-docs, she also says, being documentaries, are “not always designed to be easy and entertaining; the intent of this format is often to educate or provoke” [Pringle 2017: 149] But from my own experience, way too many i-docs (not necessarily historical ones) look engaging to begin with, before user involvement quickly diminishes and often dies out. “It appears that a great majority of [i-docs] do not keep their users beyond a few minutes” observe Samuel Gantier and Michel Labour in their study on improving i-doc UX design, admitting at the same time that there’s very few reliable systematic studies on i-doc user engagement and UX, and that their observation is largely based on their professional practice [Gantier & Labour 2017: 101][30].

This 'switching off' was something I wanted to avoid in *Phocaea 1914*, so the web designer and I decided that we'd test, tweak and re-design parts of the documentary –or even the entirety of the artefact, if feedback suggested we should– **to get to a point where (a) mildly-interested-in-the-project users would remain engaged with the product (b) to the extent that they would not miss crucial information.**

Who were these mildly-interested-in-the-project users, i.e. the target testing audience? People already engaged with the project in some way (colleagues, teachers, etc.) of any cultural background, and Greeks and Turks.

What would it mean for them not to miss crucial information? It would mean to visit at least all three of the informational levels (Past/Present/Experts' Menu) and, ideally, both countries in the Present universe (Greece/Turkey).

How would this testing take place? Through various usability testing methods : depending on what needed to be tested (first click/ next moves/ time of overall engagement with the artefact/ why some users do or do not engage with specific areas of the i-doc, etc.), we'd use (i) specific questions, (ii) silent observation, and (iii) open-ended discussion in collecting user feedback. Admittedly, the usability testing methods used were quite informal but this project did not call for a systematic evaluation of the *Phocaea 1914* UX, just for a quick way to observe the different ways in which the users engaged with it: what they missed, what they avoided, what kept them interested, etc. As Joseph Dumas and Janice Redish write in their classic *A Practical Guide to Usability Testing,* "[t]here is not as much need to justify the methodology or the results of a particular usability test. There is more acceptance of the fact that the value of usability testing is in *diagnosing problems* rather than in *validating products"* [Dumas & Redish 1999: xi][31] Unlike commercial products, for which producers often make surveys in order to know how to satisfy their targeted audience, *Phocaea 1914* had an authorial vision that needed to be served through to the end. In choosing between " 'giving the audience what they want' –what gets their first or fastest click– and engaging them in thought provoking subject matter as a tool for social good" [Pringle 2017: 149], thought-provoking engagement came first. So iterative testing (test early; test small; redesign; repeat) was there to serve the bigger picture, to help us make an informed decision on how best to communicate our vision to the target audience [Gaudenzi 2017b: 121].

The successive iterations were built on WordPress, rather than Klynt, Korsakow or other interactivity-dedicated software tools. The reason was simple: this being a digital ark of memory that would, at some point, eventually, be handed over to the Fokaia and Foça communities, we needed an easily manipulable back end. WordPress is extremely popular and so most developers are well acquainted with its coding possibilities – which are aplenty and, most importantly, well maintained and constantly evolving (unlike Flash for example, on which many i-docs were built, and which, after many years of not being maintained, was finally withdrawn by Adobe, resulting in those webdocs

being now un-visitable). WordPress is quick and has great responsiveness. And unlike plain HTML, it's got a very handy and popularised dashboard and plug-in tools that can help the handover to future administrators.

5.4.1 Iteration 1

In the two pictures below (fig.14) you can see the very first digital actualization of the paper prototype, before we decided to colourize the background by creating new digital maps, one based William Robert Shepherd's 1911 Historical Atlas (fig.1, p.13), the other on current Google Maps.

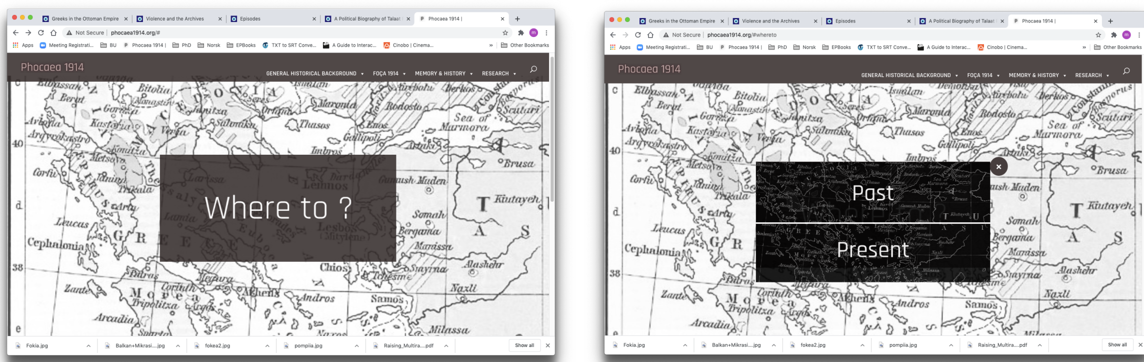


fig. 14 First Digital Iteration, early landing page

Simply by hovering over the "Where to" box, the user would be immediately given the option Past vs. Present (fig.14), matched by Past vs. Present maps:

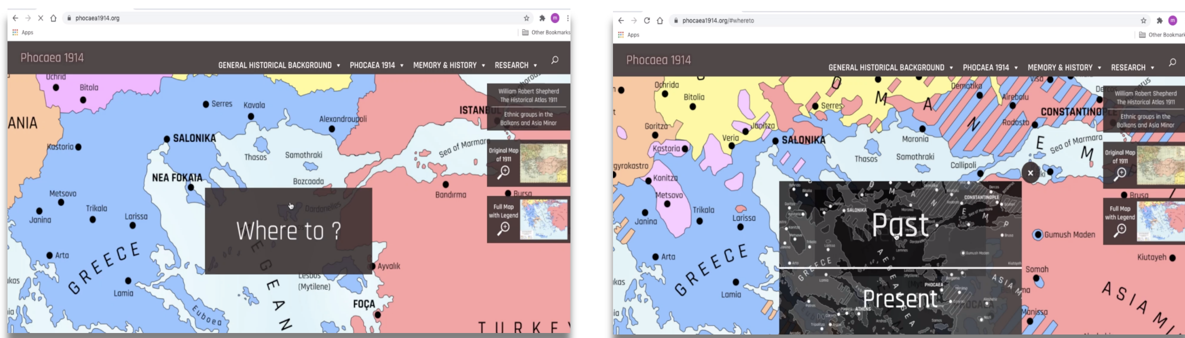


fig. 15 First Digital Iteration, Landing Page hover-over: on the left, map based on current Google Maps; on the right map based on the 1911 historical atlas by William Robert Shepherd (NYC)

Selecting PAST opened a page depicting –in vintage– the map of the past (fig.15) and gave one the option of zooming into Phocaea to explore further (fig. 16) testimonies.

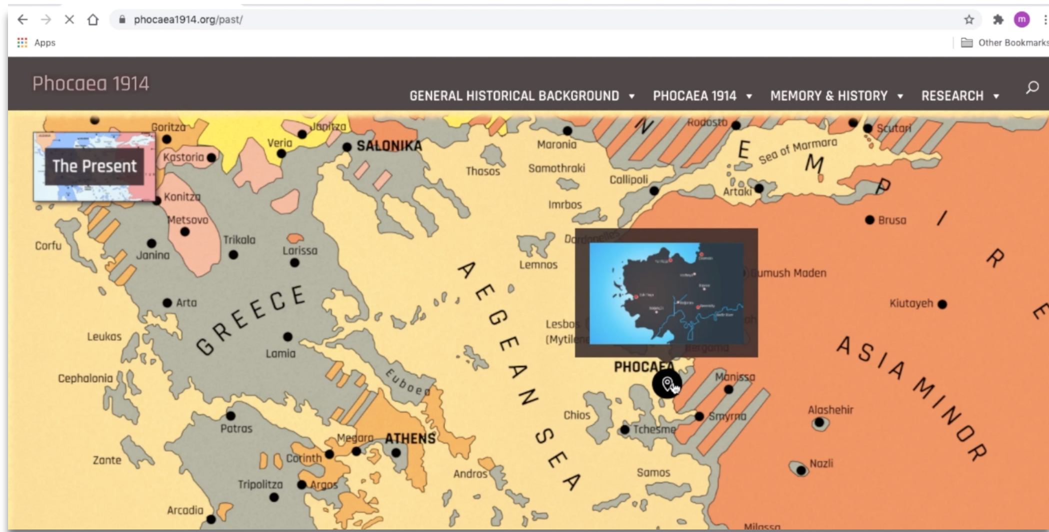


fig. 16 First Digital Iteration, PAST

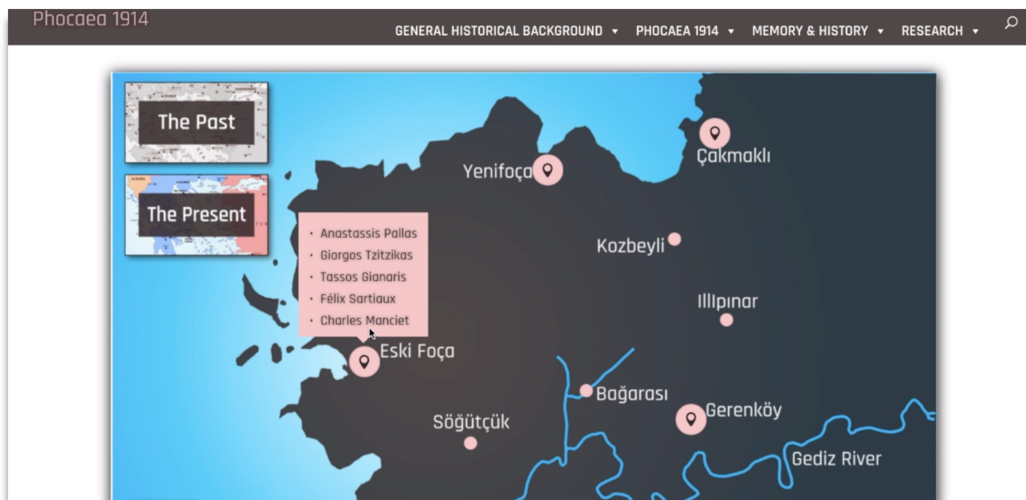
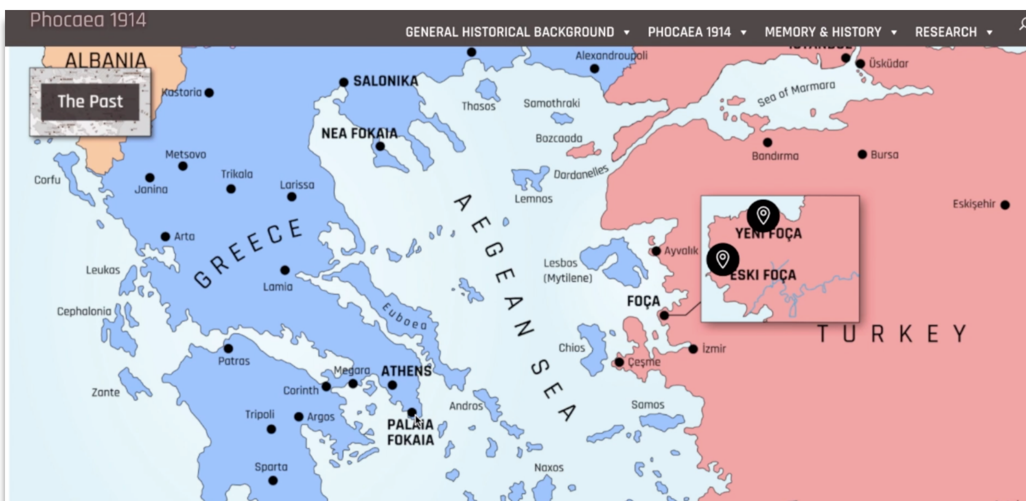


fig. 17 First Digital Iteration, PAST>PHOCAEA. Available testimonies from 1914

Similarly, selecting PRESENT transferred the user to the map of the present and, through hotspots, opened up the option of exploring interviews with current residents:



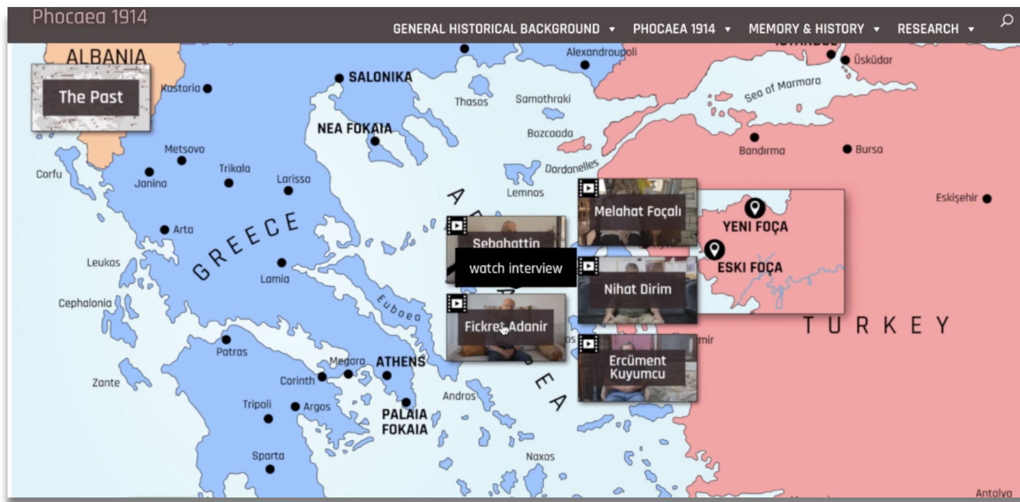


fig. 18 First Digital Iteration, PRESENT

As for the experts' menu, a beta-version had already been mounted on the permanent top menu:

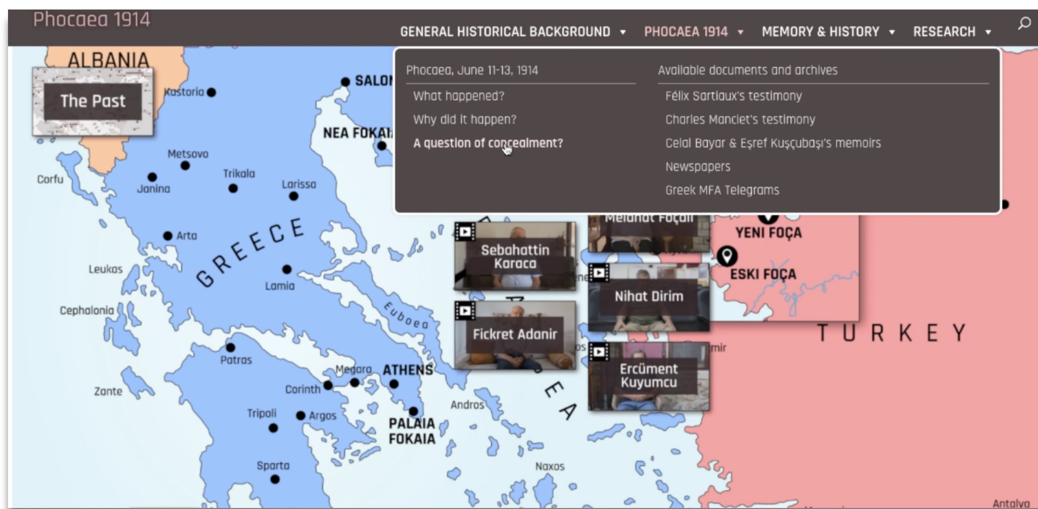


fig. 19 First Digital Iteration, EXPERTS MENU

This was the first digital iteration that we beta-tested for navigation, without, that is, mounting any of the actual content (videos etc.). The point was to figure out –through specific questions– what the users understood from the get-go, what they'd choose to do next, and whether they would actually be interested in visiting all three main areas of the i-doc: past, present, experts' menu. Here are some of the responses that had the largest impact in re-designing the interface:

a. A (media-based) colleague who knew of the project, but was unfamiliar with the geography of the area, was confused with the hover-over option of the landing page, not understanding (i) what the maps depicted (despite indicative legends) & (ii) how and why they changed between past and present. He made a point to visit all available options and links, so missed no information.

b. A (media-based) colleague unfamiliar with the project (and to whom nothing was explained) was completely lost: they had no idea what they were looking at, or who made it. They expressed a desire for a title, a trailer, anything that would inform them about the artefact. Being confused from the get-go, they only clicked on Past & Present options and completely missed clicking on the Experts' Menu.
c. Several users had a problem with the geographically-located hover-over options of the hotspots: the hotspots themselves were not directly clickable- one had to hover over them to get to the clickable button and move forward. This created unexpected amounts of confusion and even frustration.
d. Users A & B, both Greek, both working in marketing, admitted that they had not heard of the 1914 events but showed no surprise that such a pogrom had happened, collating the story with the later 1922 *Catastrophe*. Interestingly, they chose to navigate only towards the Present and wanted to find out whether current Turks knew of what happened. User A also wanted to find out whether there were any Greeks left in Foça and user B was the only one of the two clicking on the Experts' Menu, but was unsure what extra informative value it had.

Brief conclusions:

1. The hover-over option of the present/past maps on the landing page did not work. It was unclear what those maps where, what they depicted, why they were interchangeably juxtaposed. The second iteration would have to juxtapose Past and Present in a different manner, by splitting the home screen in two for example, and clearly explaining how the maps were related to the two "universes".
2. There was a need for a landing page and/or a short welcoming video or text. The video/text would give a brief idea about the 1914 events (clearly extricating them from the later 1922 *Catastrophe*). The landing page would briefly explain: what *Phocaea 1914* was about, who it was made by and for what reason. It was also a good idea to give some navigational tips now that the videos and the content would be uploaded too.
3. We had to steer away from the geographically-located hover-over hotspot design and find some other plug-in to help the users move into deeper layers in the website.
4. Both Users A & B seemed to be interested in what the 'other side' thought but not in order to find out what actually happened –they seemed pretty confident about that (even though they'd admitted they didn't know of the 1914 events) –rather in order to having their own prejudices confirmed[32]. So there was an imperative need to find ways to lead user to surprise themselves. We decided to do that via content rather than via architecture: we'd link videos, interviews, testimonies, etc. with other videos/interviews etc. that presented a different point of view.

5.4.2 Iteration 2

By the second digital iteration we had to enrich the interface with the content that had been gathered from archival search and filming trips to Greece and Turkey, and test it out. With the exception of some videos connected to interviews we did in Turkey, I was the sole person responsible for transcribing, translating, editing, and subtitling the entirety of the content you see in *Phocaea 1914*, and for how this content was hyperlinked in the back end of platform. Here's one of the latest versions of the "Diagram of Connections", the unseen links that traverse the entire artefact and lead from one video and/or recording and/or photo gallery to others:

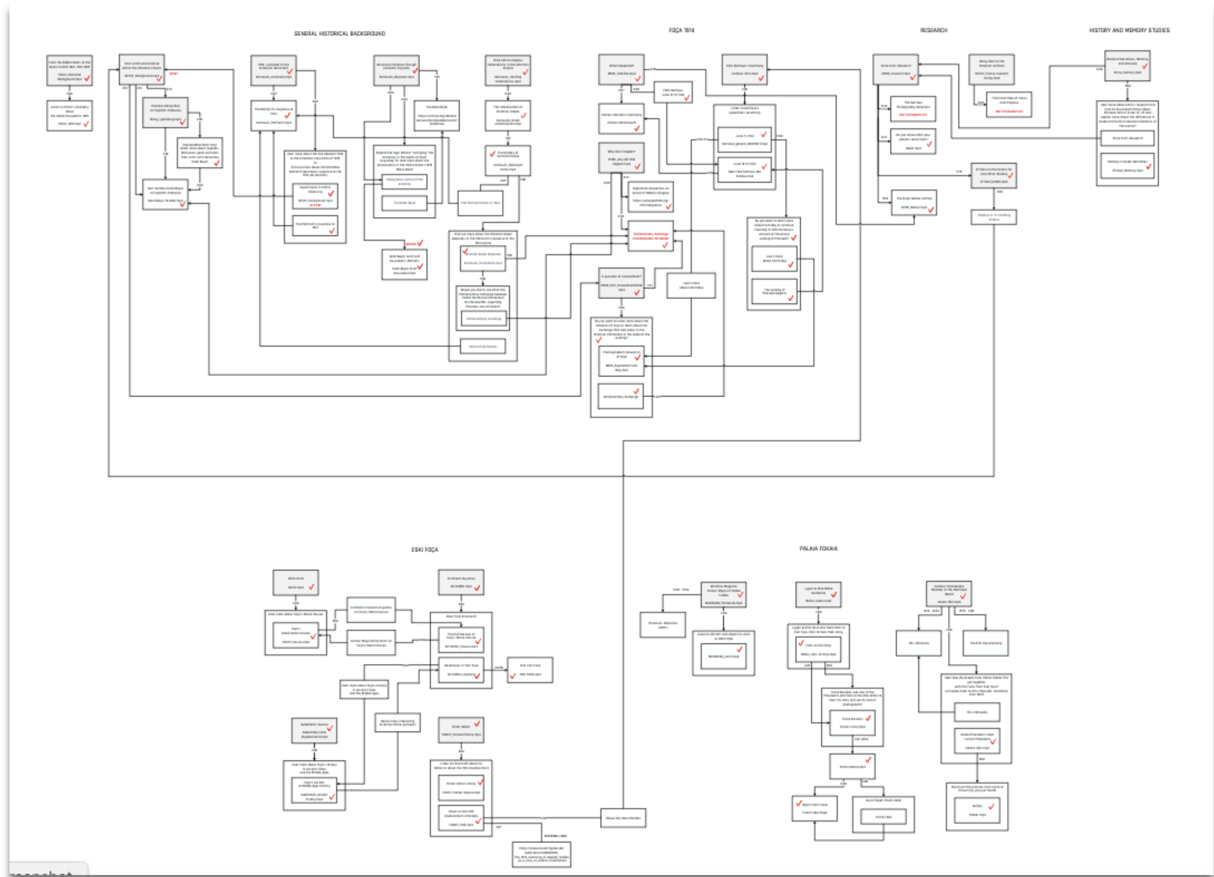


fig. 20 Second Digital Iteration, Back End: Diagram of Connections

The Diagram of Connections (DoC) describes the possible sequential user journeys that can be followed within the database (non-sequential, random journeys are possible too). It epitomizes why I wanted to create an interactive rather than a film documentary: it exhibits all of the *multiple* ways a user can end up on a particular portion ("node") of the grander mosaic/canvas.

It also allows for a way to disrupt people's prejudices –which was a concern that came up through usability testing of Iteration 1. Look, for example, at the following particular section of the DoC which connects the *description* of the economic boycotts encouraged by the Ottoman government against their Rum citizens (1), with the *justification* of the boycotts (2) but also with a

testimonial account of parallel persecutions (3). Or the way the larger reality of rising nationalism in the crumbling Empire (4) did not only lead to persecution of minorities but also to the radicalisation of the Rum (Ottoman Greeks) themselves (5), encourage by secret societies supported by the Kingdom of Greece (6).

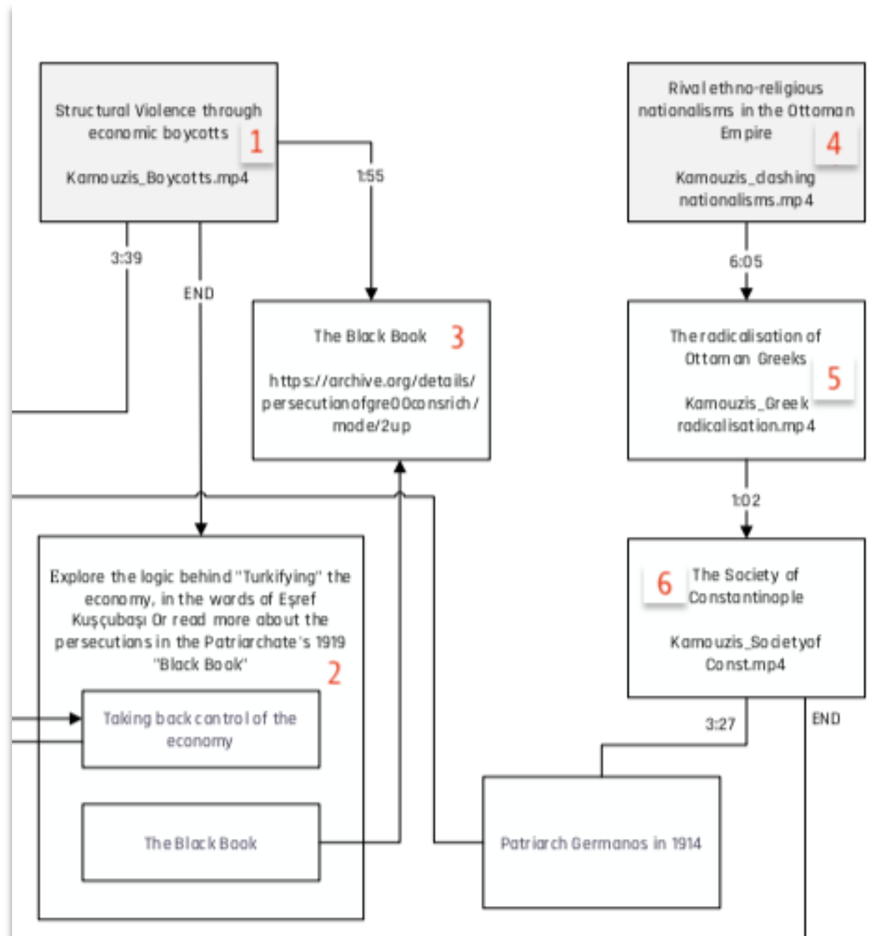


fig. 21 Second Digital Iteration, Back End: Diagram of Connections (part of)

How were these connections translated at the Front End of *Phocaea 1914*? In other words, how was the user enticed to follow this or that user journey, or to choose among several different options in exploring further? Through the use of several instinctive tools, well-rehearsed from YouTube videos: pop-up cards (fig.22), end cards/end screens (fig.23), thumbnail playlists (fig.24), and succession menus (fig. 26). Because we needed more elbow room for interaction between content items we chose to work with Camtasia, rather than mount our videos on YouTube; we could thus avoid users bumping into random videos that are often generated algorithmically on YouTube at the end of other videos or during play, for example. But we did keep YouTube's best practices, exhibited below:

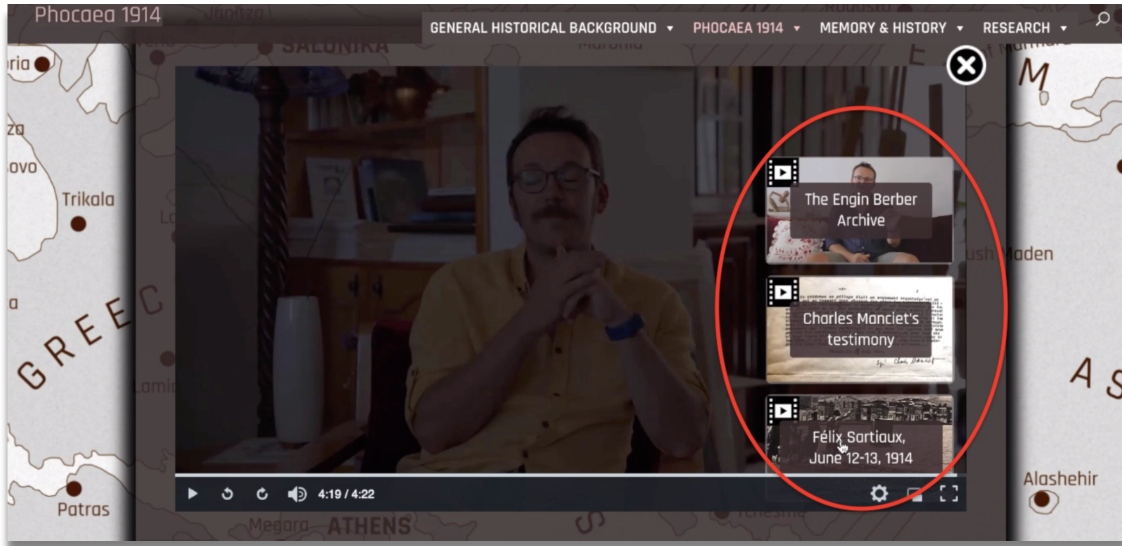


fig. 22 Second Digital Iteration, Front End.
Historian Emre Erol's recounting of what happened opens up (during play) options to listen to either one of two eye-witness testimonies, or to move on to a meta-discussion of how Erol was given access to a rarely-available, private archive of oral histories from 1914.

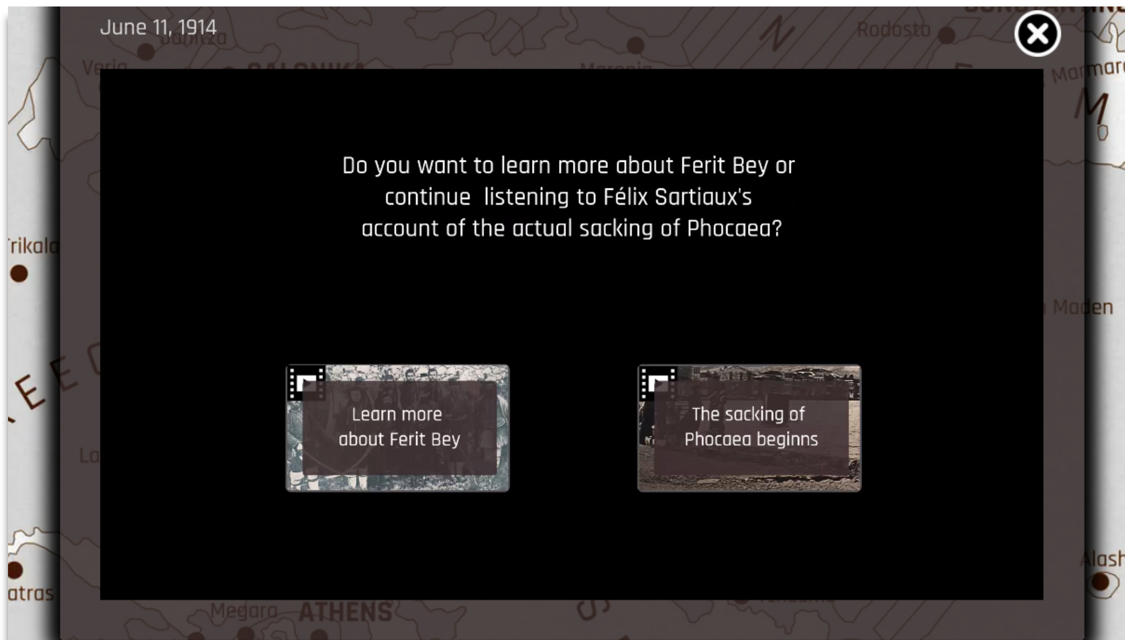


fig. 23 Second Digital Iteration, Front End.
After Félix Sartiaux' eye-witness testimony (part 1) ends, an end card urges the user to move forward by choosing either to listen to the rest of the story ("The sacking of Phocaea begins") or to side-track towards finding more about one of the perpetrator behind the pogrom, Phocaea's mayor Ferit Bey.
At all times, there's an X button on the top right corner to emergency-exit the particular user journey.

fig. 24 Second Digital Iteration, Front End.
An example of a horizontal playlist from the WHAT HAPPENED section

fig. 25 Second Digital Iteration, Front End.
An example of a "succession menu" (a menu which shows which videos follow the one currently playing) from the PAST>ESKI FOÇA section

We made a conscious effort to design entire parts of the documentary –especially the ones that incorporated current interviews– in a manner that mirrored interface patterns familiar to internet users: it's been shown that audiences understand and use digital interactivity according to their own, familiar conceptual patterns [Nash 2014; Quiring 2009]. Or as Jakob Nielsen's Law of Internet UX says: follow platform and industry conventions[33].

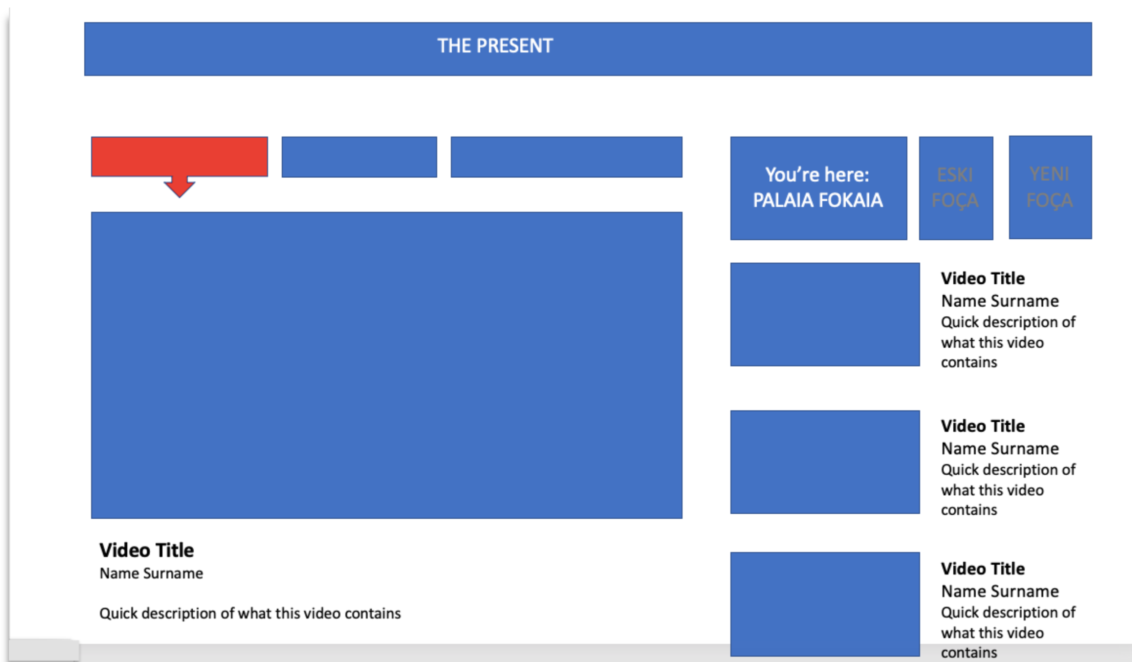


fig. 26 Second Digital Iteration. Prototype for what the video interface of PRESENT might look like.

Fig. 26 shows an interface that looks a lot like a YouTube page (again): a central video with a top “succession menu” leading to other videos, a vertical playlist on the right-hand side for related videos and/or galleries, placeholders (“YOU ARE HERE”) to remind the user where s/he is and what other pages (rather than just videos) they can transfer to. Here’s how it translates in the actual artefact:

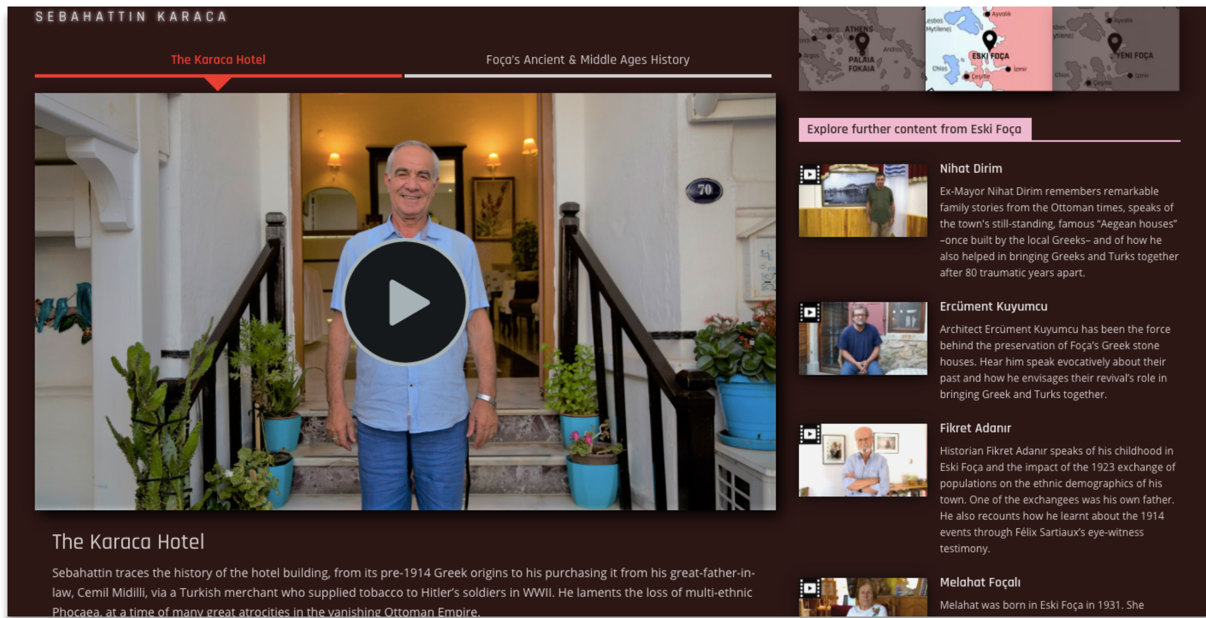


fig. 27 Second Digital Iteration, Front End: PRESENT> ESKI FOÇA

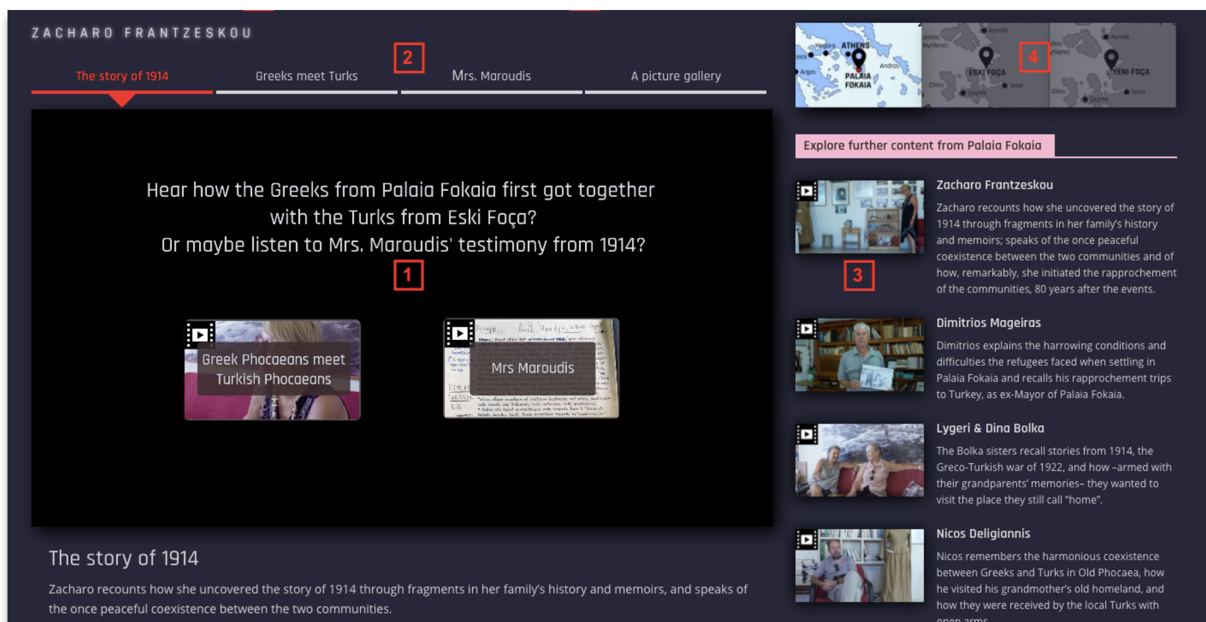


fig. 28 Second Digital Iteration, Front End: PRESENT> PALAIA FOKAIA
We’re at the end of the video. The end card urges the user to pick either of two options to move forwards [1]. But there’s plenty more to pick from: move on along the “succession menu” on top [2]; pick any of the videos from the Palaia Fokaia playlist on the right [3]; or change location to Eski Foça or Yeni Foça [4]

When we usability tested these examples with four different participants (this time via a half-an-hour remote silent observation –through Skype– followed by open-ended discussion) we saw that people did make use of most available options on their screens: they visited most videos, clicked on at least one option on end screens and succession menus, moved from Palaia Fokaia to the Turkish Foças and back –whether they were Greek or Turkish– and in general showed great excitement with the overall aesthetics of the interface. This meant that we had tackled two of the problems identified when testing *Iteration 1*: the hover-over hotspot problem, which discouraged users to move deeper into the artefact; and the need to find a way to disrupt their prejudices with a journey that would expose them to different sides of the story.

We still needed, however, to tackle the problems with the landing and home pages identified above, which are after all the "shopfront" of the i-doc. We decided to try out a landing page that would give all necessary content and navigation info about *Phocaea 1914* to anyone who happened to land on it (fig. 30), and which would lead to a home page that would again juxtapose Past vs. Present via maps, but in a more obvious manner this time, by permanently dividing the screen in two (fig. 29).

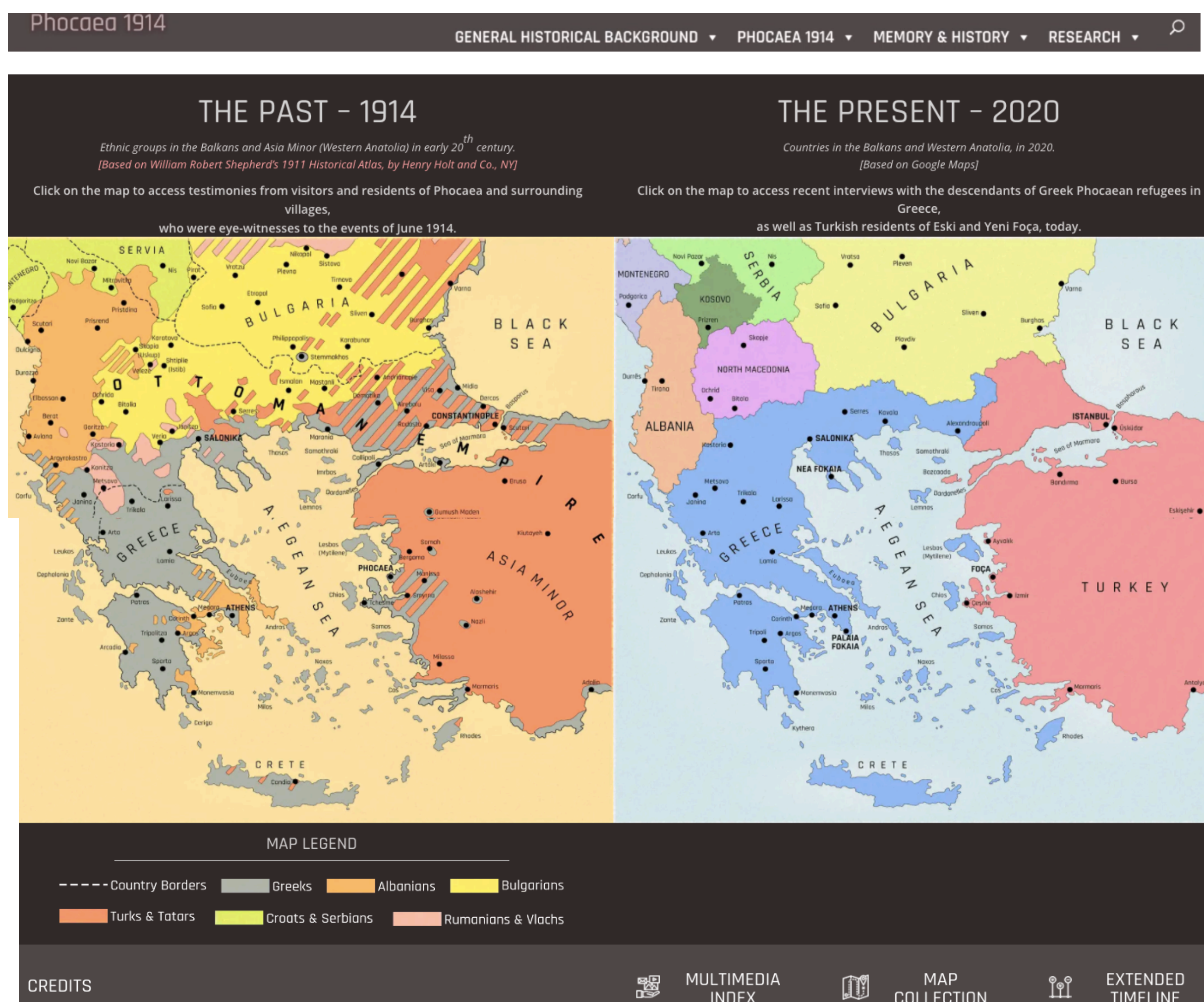


fig. 29 Second Digital Iteration. Home Page

fig. 30 Second Digital Iteration. Landing Page
(leading onto Home Page – fig.29 above)

It worked. Our respondents (whether Greek or Turkish or British) did make use of the landing page. Even those who completely skipped all of the information available on fig. 30, and clicked directly on “YOUR JOURNEY STARTS HERE”, found themselves going back to that page when they got stuck navigating around (rather than switching off, for example). Users knew what they were looking at, why they were looking at it, and what the chronological and geographical changes evident on the

home page signified. So having a landing page with content and navigational info was one of the most important takeaways from our usability tests.

There was one persistent problem, however. The Experts' Menu. Unlike the content lurking behind the two-map Home Page (fig. 29) –i.e. past oral testimonies and the present interviews– only a few users actually bothered to click on the Experts' Menu to get to see newspaper clips, telegrams, or even the historians' interviews. They thus missed the entire historical background to the story and simply "stayed" with the oral stories, thereby cancelling out a large part of the 'historical detective' UX: cross-checking against existent historical knowledge. When asked why they didn't click on the top menu, their responses were surprisingly similar: a top menu –they said– was a quick way to navigate about the site, they didn't expect it to be a separate information portal.

This was revelatory. There was a huge discrepancy behind my authorial assumptions and the users' reality: I'd thought that the Expert's Menu was an obvious shelf-like virtual object from which users would pick and choose sources to cross-check the rest of the documentary content against:

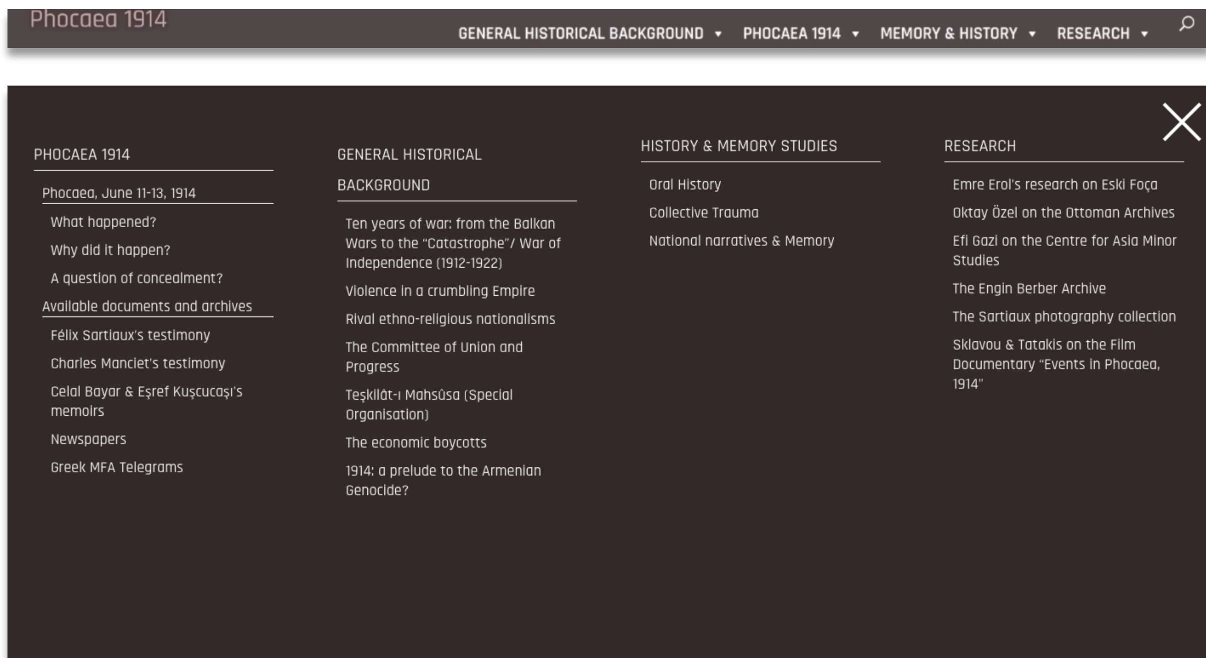


fig. 31 Second Digital Iteration, Front End: EXPERTS MENU (Top Menu)

But they'd ignored it, thinking it was some sort of a navigational short-cut. I had disregarded Jakob Nielsen's earlier-mentioned law: users will interact with a new platform the way they are used to interacting with other platforms. On most websites, top menus are simple lists of hyperlinks for what's available to explore, not library-like caverns filled with content *other* than what's accessible from centre court, so to speak:

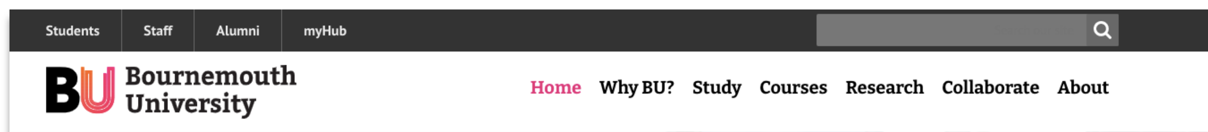
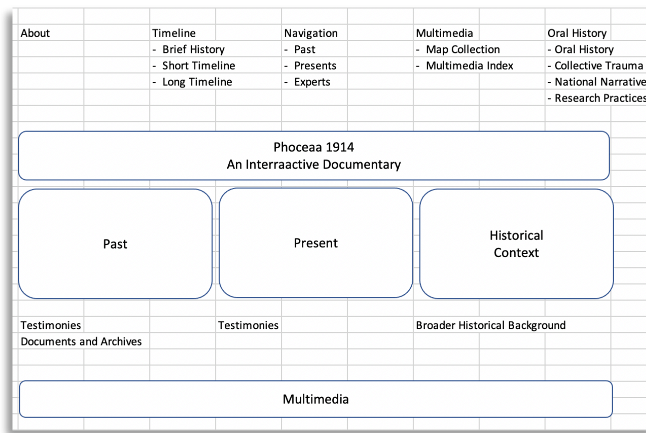


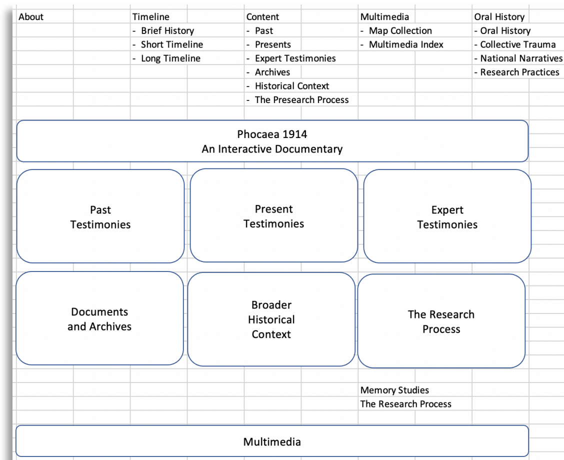
fig. 32 Typical home page Top Menus (from the top):
https://www.bournemouth.ac.uk/ —*http://i-docs.org/* — *https://www.bbc.com/news*

This sort of discrepancy was exactly why we ran iterative testing. As Sandra Gaudenzi [2017b] has eloquently shown, a lot of i-doc creators –because they come from linear storytelling traditions such as filmmaking– pay only lip service to the idea of user-centred design, and tend to be trapped by their own assumptions about what does and what doesn't make sense to their audience:

> "although most i-doc makers I interviewed in the *UX series* agreed with this statement [that the i-doc has to be designed for, and with, an audience in mind], I would argue that very few were ready to fully accept its consequences. Designing for, and with, an audience means committing to an aesthetic, a platform and a language that best […] 'make sense' for such [an] audience." [Gaudenzi 2017b: 119]

In the *Phocaea 1914* case I'd been trapped by my own conviction that cross-checking meant simulating the old-fashioned ways of going to the library, or reading books, or even searching online –in any case, *leaving the main action to go somewhere else to search for that necessary informational authority.* But I was wrong; my directorial prejudice had resulted in the users' missing most of the important information. So we went back and asked where *they* would actually place the content of the Experts Menu –the archives, the telegrams, the historians' interviews, the background information, the meta-discussions– so that it would make sense to *them*. On an equal footing with the past oral testimonies and the present interviews, so that they'd give it their equal attention. We quickly created three extremely simple prototypes and asked again which of the three explained better what the available content of *Phocaea 1914* was:





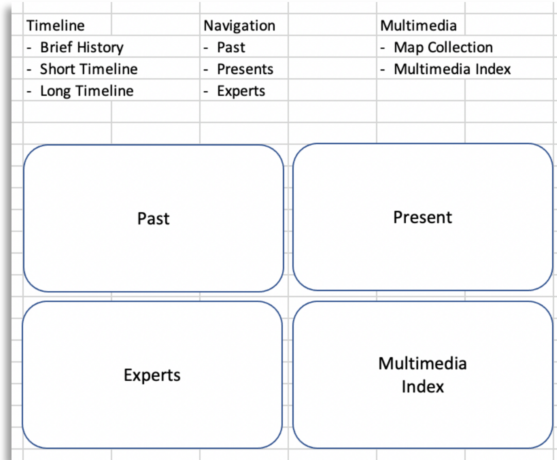


fig. 33 Prototypes for the Third Digital Iteration – usability testing phase

Their answers helped us create a beta-Home Page and a new Top Menu that *mirrored* the architecture of the site, becoming what Top Menus are: navigational shortcuts. The content of the Experts Menu was re-distributed within those four thematic categories/entry points.

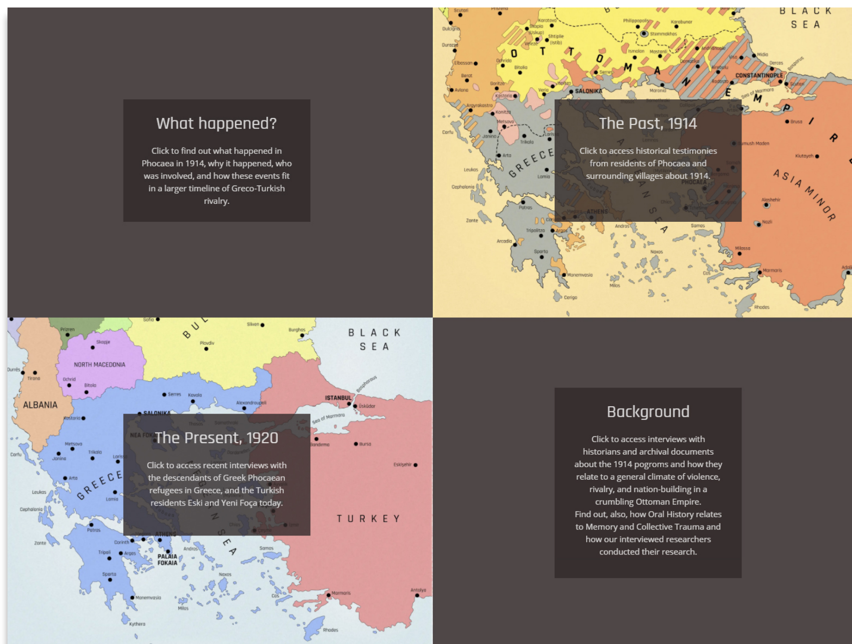


fig. 34 Third Digital Iteration, Home Page (Beta)

We developed the interface further, integrating characteristics of the Landing Page into the Home Page, redesigning the "internal levels" (four main thematic categories) of the interface to suit this new informational distribution, and ending up with what you can visit now online:

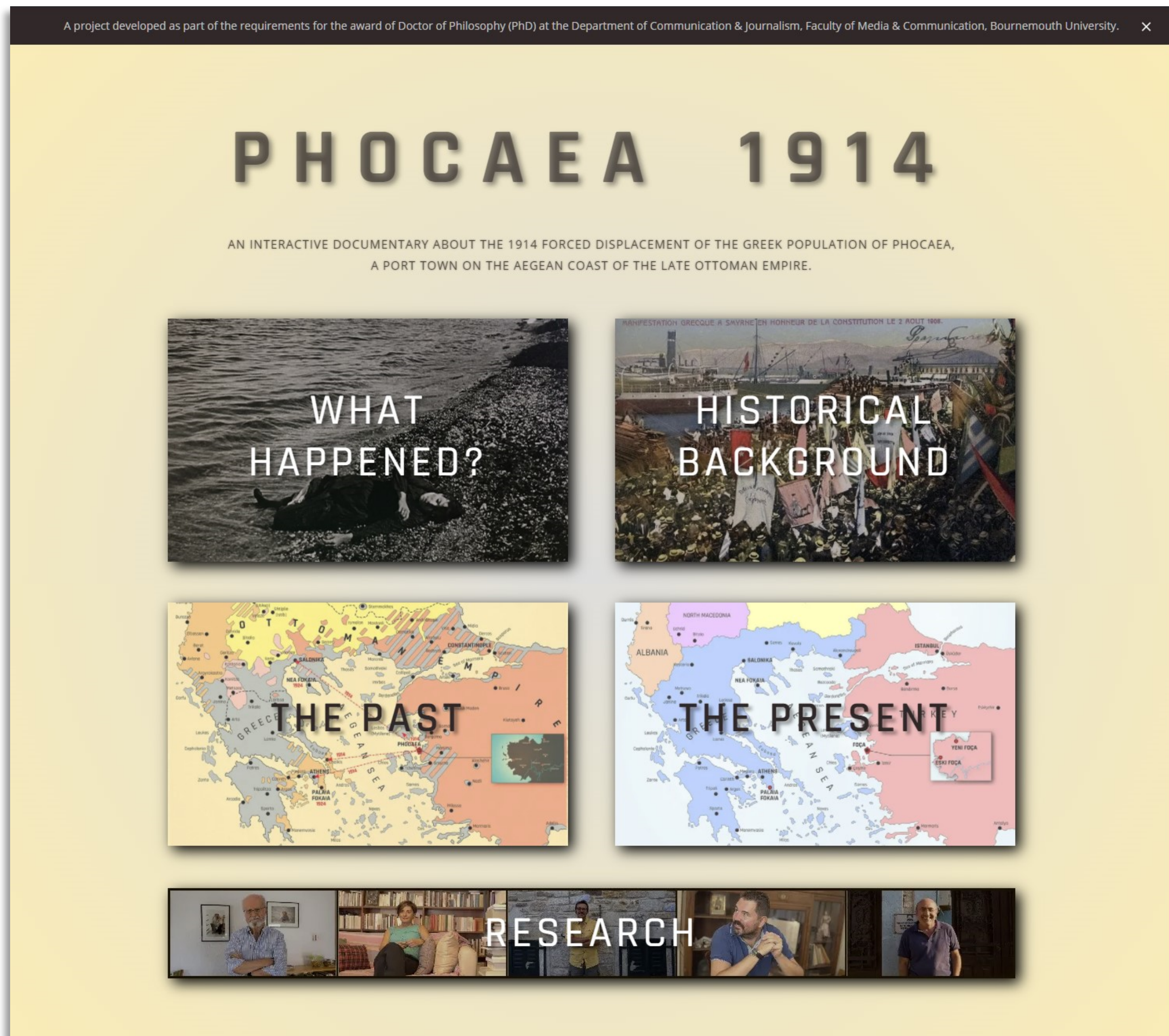


fig. 35 Third Digital Iteration. Home Page

It is quite likely that further iterative testing may yield even better results when it comes to ease of navigation and user willingness to engage with the i-doc. A quick informal survey of the users of the beta version of the Third Digital Iteration confirmed that 5 out of 6 understood what the i-doc was about, why it was created, and that there was an incidence of violence targeting the Ottoman Greeks of Phocaea back in 1914 (the words used were "they threw them out", "kicked them out", "pogrom") encouraged by the authorities. 4 out of 6 (crucially, non-Greeks) listened to the reasoning on the Turkish side but remained unconvinced by the perpetrators' logic, and 6 out of 6 were able to completely disassociate the Greeks and Turks of today from the Greco-Turkish rivalry of a hundred years ago. In a different group, all 3 Greeks surveyed did engage with the historian's interviews and

expressed surprise at learning about secret nationalist societies that operated within the Empire and impacted official policy.

Are these findings enough to corroborate Thalhofer's complexity-breeds-tolerance thesis? Absolutely not; that would need a systematic survey of a great number of users and their subsequent behaviour. But this was never the point of *Phocaea 1914*. Its point was to create a complex universe built around a little known historical incident, ensure that the visitors to this universe discern its degree of complexity without missing much important information, and create the conditions under which they could potentially ponder, by contrasting historical documents (archives, testimonies, etc.), how evidence supports –or contradicts– arguments. In this, it was successful.

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CHAPTER 6: REFLECTIONS & CONCLUSIONS

6.1 Reflecting on Design 1: User engagement, democratization, and paradigm disruption

This exegesis presents the research process behind *Phocaea 1914* in a rather more neat and sequential manner than what actually happened. As is often the case – and as was alluded to earlier in this document – data collection was frequently done simultaneously with bibliographical research and drawing up of ideas about how findings should be presented. The iterative phase, especially, was much more complicated than a simple *iteration–testing–redesign–iteration–testing–redesign–iteration* schema suggests: we tweaked and changed and tested and redesigned multiple times before going onto updating each digital version of the i-doc. The whole process was more akin to a *read–collect–read–draft–collect–read–design–test–tweak–test–collect–read–design (etc)* type of work, rather than anything linear or clear-cut.

The most important takeaway from this experience was not realising that the content collected (or not collected[34]) dictated ideas about information architecture, and vice-versa; nor that the audience ultimately make sense of the artefact in any way they want or can. After all, both these understandings are pretty much standard expectations in film documentaries [Renov 2004; Nichols 2010; Bolter & Grusin 2000]. What was striking was the gap between the production ideal I had in mind and the users' responses to it, but also the *possibility* I had in incorporating their feedback into the production. Yes, my own assumptions as a documentary maker did not necessarily match the reality of even the most patient and well-meaning users/testers (who are accustomed to a completely fragmented, busy, clickbait-ey digital environment full of pop-ups and distractions) but involving even minimal iterative testing opened up opportunities for meeting their expectations halfway. Before actually building and repeatedly testing the i-doc, I couldn't comprehend the importance of Sandra Gaudenzi's statement "i-doc storytellers are more *facilitators* than *narrators* and, together with a creative team, they are responsible for the coherence of the final user experience" [Gaudenzi 2017: 122]. I now do.

Which is not to say I shouldn't have expected it to be thus. Having looked at dozens of i-docs during my research I had myself experienced a severe lack of engagement as an audience member, a sheer lack of immersion in the material. I would tune out (turn off, navigate away from) most i-docs after 3 or 4 minutes of interaction. At some point during the research, in fact, I hit a wall both as a user and a creator because nothing I'd seen drew me in and so I felt that my own i-doc would be equally uninteresting and unappealing: because so few i-docs had had an impact on me, I saw no reason why *Phocaea 1914* would make an impression on anyone. This lack of immersion is a real problem and interactive designers and hypertext authors have been struggling with it for decades: the

pleasure of immersion, wrote Janet Murray (prophetically, back in the pre-social media area) enhances users' interaction with the hypertext: "the challenge of the future is to invent scripts that are formulaic enough to be easily grasped and responded to" [Murray 1998: 79]. In James Pope's 2009 empirical study of hypertext fiction, a lot of readers were distracted from the act of reading either by a too-fractured, too-unfamiliar (or difficult), or too-busy interface, resulting in a "fatal loss of interest" [Pope 2009 n.p.]. The question was: does this difficulty cancel the value of all i-docs for me and if not (which was the case) how do I go about getting over this hurdle? How would I make an i-doc that was initially immersive for me and subsequently immersive for a limited audience?

This was the original thinking process which led me to the idea of a 'historical detective' UX: Pope had found that a lot of his tested readers were distracted from reading hypertexts "by *playing* with the interface to see what it would do, because they actually enjoyed *that* activity" [Pope 2009 n.p.]; in my research, I started feeling immersed in my project when I realised what I was passionate about: *playing* the historical detective, like Orhan Pamuk's character on p. 31 of this document. Could I recreate this experience for my users, without actually designing an online game? When the first usability tests started showing that it would not be as easy as I thought, repeated iterative testing – asking the audience what they understood and how their understanding could be facilitated – became a must. And iterative testing showed that the simpler and the more familiar/intuitive an interface is (i.e. the more it imitates existing highly used platforms), the more likely is to keep the audience engaged, active, and inquisitive. And the more engaged, active, and inquisitive users were, the less likely they were to miss important information and to engage with the narrative juxtapositions highlighted by the content of the i-doc.

In fact, further research into how popular UX design heuristics (such as Jakob Nielsen's 10 principles [Nielsen 1994/2020]) might aid i-doc users' immersion would be a welcome addition to the current research (but see also [Pope 2009 & 2000] for precisely such a study in hypertext fiction and new media narratives.) We ourselves tried to incorporate some of Nielsen's 10 principles in the design of *Phocaea 1914,* as a nod to the users, but this was not systematically done nor tested (still, you can see a quick overview of how *Phocaea 1914* fulfils Nielsen's suggestions in this document's *Appendix*).

Nielsen's principles suggest that even simple tweaks and additions can help a developer make a huge difference in terms of user experience, establish a connection with the user, and win their confidence and willingness to spend time on the developed artefact. The key takeaway for i-docs is this: yes, an i-doc maker is allowed to have as much artistic elbow room as s/he wants; like experimental writers, s/he does not need to explain their work to anyone. Unless of course we all agree that "key functions of the documentary have always been to enhance public knowledge, to provide citizens with the informational resources they need for deliberating decision-making" [Wiehl 2018: 274]. An i-doc maker does not create art for art's sake, they create *for the user*, a target audience, in which case the user needs to be able to understand what they're interacting with. The

better they understand it, the more likely they are to be receptive to its message, whatever that may be.

This is, in a way, a means to democratize i-doc production other than through co-production [Dinmore 2014; Wiehl 2018], co-creation of meaning through cognitive negotiation [McRoberts 2015; Iser 1980], or amplification of silenced voices [Hudson 2020]. It is a matter of producers and audiences collaborating towards a "social construction of reality" [Burger & Luckman 1966] through constant UX feedback between the two. This shifts the legitimization of documentary discourse from the genre's specific relation to reality, to its *performative* capacity: navigating through an interactive documentary is "a *performance* of documents" [Hudson 2020: 133, his emphasis] not just in the way that reading a text is a performance of meaning [Iser 1980] but on a level where user performativity alters the interface. If control of the interface is a "new level of power", as Gaudenzi [2014] suggests, then user performativity is a new level of power.

And there is another thought connected to performativity that we can develop further: if performativity is by definition a social act –it always addresses a community– [Fischer-Lichte 2008: 25] and i-doc users structure their performance (their interaction) with reference to their own existing interests, skills, and experience [Nash 2014], then a user's journey within an i-doc is a social act: it belies things about the user and their identity *within a community*. What the user does in an i-doc is an event in itself, in that it speaks volumes of the accepted narratives and unconscious ways of thinking that guide their choice, ways that have been created by communal understandings of identity. So if one of the purposes of an i-doc is to disrupt such narratives/understandings, tracing the users' early iterative journeys may identify what the i-doc needs to focus on to achieve this disruptive event. In our case, not only did I wish to challenge binary national narratives that promote animosity, victimisation, and a sense of self-righteousness on either side of the Aegean, but the collected testimonies themselves defied national narrative expectations. Having thus observed, through tentative usability testing after Iteration 1, that Greek users tended to want to navigate around in order to have their own prejudices confirmed (something noted in other studies involving community-based interactive oral histories [McRoberts 2015]), it was crucial to design ways in which such users would not miss the important, disruptive nature of *Phocaea 1914*'s content. So we hyperlinked informational nodes (videos, texts, etc.) with other nodes that presented a different point of view. We intentionally, that is, designed the i-doc in a way that the users could move around outside their echo chambers. Had we not tested early user journeys or not appreciated their performative significance, much of the paradigm-disrupting potential of *Phocaea 1914* would have been completely lost.

*

6.2 Reflecting on Design 2: A means for teaching Historical Empathy

We do have to highlight a contradiction at the very heart of what we've been thus far discussing: on one hand we're saying that creators must aim for immersion in order to keep the user engaged, and at the same time we're saying that we need Brechtian *Verfremdung* (alienation, distance, defamiliarization) and complexity –through exposure of authorial mechanisms à la Bellinck or Thalfhofer– to keep the user evaluative, reflective, and philosophical! In the case of *Phocaea 1914*, this becomes much more than the well-analysed author vs. user / good vs. bad control debate, even though some insights from that discussion are certainly applicable here (that author control and user agency must be well balanced [Murray 1998] for example, or that interactivity disrupts reading pleasure [Miall & Dobson 2001]). In discussing a historical (lest we forget) i-doc, the immersion vs. defamiliarization debate brings out one of the core discussions in History education: to what extent can empathy and historical critical thinking co-exist?

There is a vast literature on what historical empathy is[35] and how students successfully develop it[36] in order to complement–rather than compromise– critical thinking. As the diagram below shows,

fig. 36 Diagram of historical empathy and its components (adapted from Endacott & Brooks 2013 by McKinney, Sierra et. al 2020) as shown in McKinney, Sierra et. al 2020: 186

historical empathy stands at the critical intersection between affective appreciation of and keeping a critical distance from the past: it is "the skill to re-enact the thought of a historical agent in one's mind or the ability to view the world as it was seen by the people in the past, without imposing today's values on the past" [Yilmaz 2007: 331]. It is to acquire "a historian's sense": to understand rather than moralize, to learn not to project one's own ethical world onto history [Politis 2006: 29, my translation]. Or as Foster [2001: 167] lists, historical empathy:

- does not involve imagination, identification, or sympathy
- involves understanding people's actions in the past
- involves a thorough appreciation of historical context
- demands multiple forms of evidence and perspective
- requires students to examine their own perspectives
- encourages well-grounded but tentative conclusions

So it would be not far-fetched to suggest that *Phocaea 1914*, a historical i-doc that's been designed precisely to aid users to discover diverse evidence, not miss important information, cross-check this information against the existent historiography, discover conflicting interpretations of the events, understand how these interpretations push against each other and where their bias might stem from, begin to appreciate how a historical researcher works in untangling such biases, and feel excited about this journey of historical discovery (as listed and explained above, on p.57) is a fertile testing ground for historians and teachers of history to survey and assess how and to what extent historical empathy can be developed through digital interactive artefacts.

In this sense, it could nicely fit alongside the work of Michael Davies and Theo Cohen for *Parallel Histories* [Davies 2017-ongoing], or Thomas Ketchell's [2014] "HSTRY", whose original idea to have Belgian and Congolese students study the history of how the Democratic Republic of Congo became independent through playing-out characters from that era, with the help of interactive technology, has now evolved into an impressive, self-standing, digital tool for history teachers called *Sutori* [Ketchell 2016].

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6.3 Reflecting on Content 1: Potential research areas for Collective Trauma and Memory Studies

It is also worth noticing further potential areas of research that the *Phocaea 1914* testimonies can contribute to, in the fields of Memory Studies and/or Collective Trauma.

It was sociologist Maurice Halbwachs who, in 1925, first explicitly stated that we don't *understand* our recollections unless we place them within the cognitive patterns of a collectivity. It may look like our memories are distinctively ours (and to a certain extent they are) but they are always socially influenced [Halbwachs 1992]. What we remember exists in a symbiotic relationship with how the past is publicly processed (to illustrate this, think of how our memories may be contaminated by media or nostalgia or even "distorted by a sense of grievance" [Tosh 2010: 320] [37]). Historians understand that testimonies may exhibit gaps, silences, conflations, entrenched social norms, unconsciously internalised exigencies (political, national, even linguistic) not just because of the bias of subjectivity, but also because of the social origins of the way we interpret and manage our memories. This is why they are treated as a raw material for the writing of history and subjected to

critical analysis: *why* people remember what they remember, is often more important than *what* they remember [Norrick 2005] and it speaks volumes about the communities in which they belong.

Phocaea 1914 is a rich tapestry of present-day testimonies which largely (but not always) defy Greek and Turkish national narratives: on the Greek side, the Greek Phocaeans I interviewed were loudly adamant about separating their forefather's plight in the hands of irregular Turkish bandits from how we should be looking at the Turks of today. I remember thinking during the interviews how impressive it was that these people, whose families had truly suffered, were more Turkophiles than most of the Greeks who have no roots in Turkey –and hence no trauma from Turkey– and whose families had never been forced out[38]. But the Phocaeans were willing to overlook all this. Whether that is because present Turkish Foçalıs welcomed them with open arms, or because they are tired of carrying the refugee trauma (as many admitted, in different ways, in front of the camera), is ground for further research that falls outside the scope of this thesis. On the Turkish side, Nihat Dirim related how his grandfather saved dozens of Ottoman Greeks by hiding them inside his home; and how he later refused to do business with people who had stolen their *Rum* neighbours' animals *[see interview with Nihat Dirim in i-doc]*. Erol mentions that Turkish eye-witness Mehmet Tahsin Kalkan offered a similar account of local Turks resisting the bandits [Erol 2016: 107]. In another memoir included in the i-doc, that of Anna Kindyni-Maroudis, from New Phocaea, the fleeing Greeks remember their Turkish neighbours crying over their departure. In her interview in the i-doc, Melahat Foçalı highlights her father's friendship with his Greek neighbours. In his moving interview, Ercüment Kuyumcu constantly comes back to the idea of the two peoples coming together to live in peace, because what binds them is so much more than what divides them *[see interview with Ercüment Kuyumcu in i-doc]*

A lot of Greek Phocaeans and Turkish Foçalıs are obviously willing to go against their respective dominant national narratives. This, I find very exciting. Not least for the Turks, who have after all been under the scrutiny of Turkish Criminal Code's article 159 which makes it a crime to "insult Turkishness" (*Türklüğü tahkir*), a law which banned from public domain anything that would challenge national pride [Iğsız 2008: 456][39]. But why is it so? Is it because a lot of Turkish *Foçalı*s (residents of Foça, Turkey) have refugee- or exchangee- background themselves? Their parents either fled from the Balkans during the Balkan wars, or moved from the eastern Aegean islands when the islands were handed over to Greece in 1914, or were even forcefully exchanged in 1924, as part of the Greco-Turkish Population Exchange. When they come to Greece, they visit their old hometowns in Kavala, Lemnos, Lesvos, or Crete and look for family memories. When the Greeks travel to Foça, they look for their family homes and for landmarks they've been hearing about since childhood: a tree or a well take on a whole different meaning, as if their presence corroborates the reality of old stories. Is it this common sense of uprooting that informs such disruptive non-national narratives? Had I more time with both communities, I would have asked whether that is what made them so open to the 'other side'. I'm sorry to say I never thought of putting it in so many words during my interviews with them.

Or, as Aslı Iğsız suggests, what brings these communities together might just be the fact of "belonging to a same soil, a geographic identification rendered through familial affiliation to a geography of place" [Iğsız 2008: 466]. Further research could tease such answers out and evaluate their consequences. And so these are the research possibilities that *Phocaea 1914* i-doc may open up for someone working in the field of Collective Trauma and/or Collective Memory.

Even more importantly, perhaps, the content of *Phocaea 1914* can cut both ways when it comes to considering collective trauma: echoing Halbwachs, American sociologist Jeffrey C. Alexander suggests that cultural trauma is not the result of a group experiencing actual *pain,* but the experience of *identity discomfort* whether the pain is real or not [Alexander 2004: 10]. So yes, the curated content of Fokaia/Foça testimonies can be seen as shifting the focus from "the image of the self as victim" towards the image of the Other [Lytra 2014: 204]. But, *at the same time,* the memoirs and telegrams of abettors Celal Bayar, Eşref Kuşçubaşı, and Talaat Pasha reveal the ideological national narrative constructed around a perceived trauma that "cried out for revenge" [Alexander 2004: 8] – namely, the forceful expulsion of 400,000 Muslims from the Balkans. The revenge angle is important: both 19th and 20th centuries were full of angry nationalist groups and their intellectual spokespeople who proclaimed being traumatised by some antagonistic ethnic and political group which they then had to battle in turn, suggests Benedict Anderson in his seminal study of the process of nation-building [Anderson 1983]. This was the Committee of Union and Progress' constant and main argument not only in forcefully displacing the Ottoman Greeks but also in perpetrating acts of genocide against the Armenians. It is an argument repeated again and again in the curated content of *Phocaea 1914* and, interestingly enough, it is an argument replicated in current Turkish national (and nationalist) narratives. As Neil Smelser suggests: if historical memory is established as trauma, it has to be continuously sustained and reproduced in order to continue in that status [Smelser 2004: 38]

So whether on how a sense of uprooting informs collective identities, or how cultural trauma may bring together communities who fall on different sides of larger, confrontational national narratives, or even on how collective trauma enables divisive national and nationalist narratives to perpetuate their power, *Phocaea 1914* offers plenty of fecund evidence for researchers in areas of Collective/Cultural Trauma, Collective Memory, and Memory and History studies to work on.

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6.4 Reflecting on Content 2: Was Thalhofer right?

In 1992, the then Vice Mayor of Palaia Fokaia in Greece, Mrs. Zacharo Frantzeskou, decided to organize a trip to Old Phocaea. She invited any neighbours/descendants of Phocaean refugees who wished to join her to come along. She'd been hearing her grandfather lamenting his lost home ever since she was a child: he wrote poems about Phocaea and gave them to her to read out loud. Her

family –like a lot of families in Palaia Fokaia– had been brought up with stories about an idealised, rich and fertile place, where trees blossomed twice a year and life was idyllic *[see, for example, the interviews with the Bolka sisters or Dimitrios Mageiras in the i-doc]*. Whatever tensions there were with their Turkish neighbours were minor, and overall the coexistence was harmonious and peaceful *[interviews with Nikos Deligiannis and Kleanthi Antonatou].* The handful of older Palaia Fokaia residents who had, with trepidation, visited their hometown in the 1970s always spoke movingly about locating their old homes and even meeting some of their old childhood friends. In 1992, Zacharo picked up the phone and asked to speak to the Mayor of Eski Foça. Nihat Dirim came on the line. He listened carefully and then replied: "I've been expecting this call for so long! Come already, you're late!"

This story was related to me separately by both Zacharo and Nihat themselves: I met and interviewed both of them for this i-doc. You can watch their interviews online. From that first meeting in 1992, a series of trips kicked off –the Greeks to Turkey, the Turks to Greece– which continued up until the 2020 coronavirus pandemic hit and borders were shut. Whatever it is that binds the two communities (beyond the personal friendships that were eventually established) the Greek Phocaeans and the Turkish Foçalıs have jointly organised cultural festivals and historical symposia, taken trips together to celebrate ancient Phocaea's colonial history[40], arranged school visits between the two countries. They even got close to making Palaia Fokaia and Eski Foça into sister cities, before (as Zacharo suggested) the Greek Ministry of Foreign Affairs objected at the last minute. If one visits Eski (and Yeni) Foça today, they'd be hard pressed to miss the lovingly restored stone houses once belonging to the Ottoman Greeks, with the names of the owners and the year of construction figuring prominently on door cornices. Which is rarely the case in other towns in Asia Minor that had once a prominent Greek presence: my grandmother's hometown of Akhisar, for example, despite being strewn with old houses built in an obvious Ottoman Greek style, has preserved no memory of its *Rum* community, let alone the inscriptions in Greek above the entrance doors.

fig. 37 Typical examples of Ottoman Greek houses in Eski Foça and Akhisar. In all three Eski Foça houses, the inscriptions in Greek on top of the entrance doors are preserved – a frequent site. The bottom right house in Akhisar had been renovated many years ago but had been standing empty. No sign of Greek inscription exists. It is quite likely that this is my grandmother's birth home.

That is not to say that there haven't been attempts at reconciliation with the past on a larger cultural front: "Since the early 1990s, the Turkish market for popular culture has been filled with an abundance of products depicting the particular cultural richness and ethno-religious colorfulness [sic] of late Ottoman society" writes Nargis Canefe [2001: 3]. Yet, this revisionism –however promising– aims to promote the false understanding of late-Ottomanism as a culture of unique tolerance, "largely devoid of gruesome or contentious details […] What happened to the land and property of millions of Christians that left Ottoman Anatolia with no promise of return? Who moved into their houses, who tilled their land, who took care of their orphans? Who replaced them in the financial, cultural and social spheres? These are only some of the questions that remain unanswered or even totally avoided by the revisionist movement." [Canefe 2001: 4]. The same could be said of Greek popular culture, which surrounds non-academic narratives about the fate of Ottoman Greeks with a bittersweet nostalgia about "the lost motherlands" ("*Χαμένες Πατρίδες")*, rarely mentioning the Other in a non-caricature-like way, or searching for complex, and even contradictory, motives behind the events[41].

But the Phocaeans and the Foçalıs in *Phocaea 1914* offered a whole different magnitude of potential cross-cultural encounters between the two people. Most telling is the interview with architect Ercüment Kuyumcu, of Eski Foça. He recalled how he came to be in possession of a handwritten letter unearthed during the restoration of an 1887 Greek house in Eski Foça's Küçük Deniz/Mikros Yialos neighbourhood. The letter, written in Greek by the person who had once built the house, was a good luck charm with a clear, nationalist wish: "*may the day come when the Greek Christian nation –recently liberated from the Turkish yoke*[42]*– sees the Cross on top of the Aya Sofya dome"*[43]. Kuyumcu's own family is of course Muslim; they come from Yugoslavia and the Caucasus, so he'd no emotional connection to Phocaea/Foça or its past before moving there in the early 2000s. And yet, we had to stop filming his interview twice because he kept bursting into tears recalling the letter from 130 years ago, laughing away the nationalist undertones of its message. "We have the same

culture, the same food, the same songs, the same coastlines" he told us. "I wish one day we'll learn to live together."

"Convincing non-historians that the past is more complex than they think, can be hard" writes historian Allen Mikaelian,"[s]uch an idea runs against engrained opinions, and introducing complexity, whether in a classroom or a television show, can raise strong emotions when it challenges ideas of nation, identity, and political orientation, as it is likely to do." [Mikaelian 2014 n.p.] It is a sceptical stance, which suggests that close-mindedness dislikes complexity. But it says nothing about whether encountering complexity encourages open-mindedness. Yet, the interviewees who offered their stories towards *Phocaea 1914* show that, in a roundabout way, Thalhofer was right after all: exposure to complexity *does* breed tolerance. At least in non-digital life. We didn't create the *Phocaea 1914* to prove that, but the interviews we collected on either side of the Aegean do empirically point to such a tentative conclusion. Further systematic testing is needed to see whether (and with what degree of ease) this can translate to the digital realm.

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6.5 In conclusion

Exactly seven years ago, in May 2014, I had my first encounter with the story of the tragic events that unfolded in Phocaea in June 1914. It was through a novel –Elias Venezis' 1939 *Galini* (Tranquility)– which speaks of the Phocaean refugees' post-*Catastrophe* struggles in establishing themselves in an uninviting land on the seacoast right outside Athens –in fact, only 10 kms from where I sat reading. Having finished the book, I got into my car and drove to Palaia Fokaia, seeing a town I'd known since childhood through completely new eyes: not as a resort on the Athenian Riviera, but as an old outpost for refugees. I began reading obsessively about its history. And some months later, walking around its streets, I noticed that on several wooden utility poles there hang an advertising poster for the world premiere of a documentary film entitled *Events in Phocaea 1914*: it was the centenary of the persecutions and directors Agnes Sklavou and Stelios Tatakis had created a film about the story before the story I'd read in Venezis' book –how the refugees fled Phocaea, Turkey, before being allowed to settle in Palaia Fokaia, Greece.

That was my first contact with Sartiaux' pictures, Haris Yiakoumis' book, but also the refugees' own testimonies about their displacement and resettlement. For seven years I have been obsessively thinking about the events, collecting previously unavailable material, discovering new sources, translating Greek-only or Turkish-only archival testimonies, delving into the minute historical and historiographical details in the available bibliography, encountering academics and non-academics who share a passion about what was once Old Phocaea and is now Eski Foça. And from all this I have put together an online interactive documentary that exhibits and contextualises the events within a

past framework, a present framework, a Greek and a Turkish framework, a historical and a historiographical framework. I have created an open-access digital ark of memory which doubles as a future site of collaboration and co-production for Greeks and Turks, as well as a future prototype for digital interactive researchers that might want to work on historical subjects, and historians who might wish to explore digital possibilities in researching and teaching history and historiography.

To execute this task, I ran the constantly-developing i-doc through several iterative phases, testing, collecting feedback, and redesigning *Phocaea 1914* again and again, whilst reflecting continuously on the design process and the future potential of the showcased content. It was a journey of sustained negotiation between what I –as an author– wanted to achieve and what the audience –as users– were ready to understand, given their interests and digital skills: a performative *pas de deux*. It revealed that one of the ways in which i-doc designers can negotiate the tension between the veracity of historical facts and the subjectivity and multiplicity of their interpretation, is to ensure that this performative *pas de deux* is architecturally corralled by existing historiographical debates. It also revealed that the more familiar the steps of this performative dance are, the easier it is for the user to follow the author's moves, but also to challenge them and set a pace of her own.

This negotiative dance or performance is, of course, in constant flux as long as one keeps testing out the artefact. Potential future iterations, for example, are likely to include new content provided by Phocaeans and Foçalıs, or address audience concerns that might not have been brought out during our tentative usability testing: this is all fertile, exciting ground for further research, further negotiation, further democratisation of the user/author relationship, and reflection on "where [i-docs] might be going" [Aston, Gaudenzi, Rose 2017: 2].

The content of *Phocaea 1914* also opens up additional research possibilities within the fields of collective trauma, memory, and the nature of national narratives –whether in how cultural trauma brings communities together, or forces them apart, by sustaining an injured identity that could call for healing or demand perpetual vigilance.

Last, but not least, *Phocaea 1914* might not have proven that digitally representing the complex nature of historical reality makes the audience more open-minded or more tolerant towards 'the Other'; but it does suggest that digitally *performing* historical complexity (through constant usability testing of complex representations) might be a way for digital authors to disrupt engrained historical narratives, and injured collective identities fuelled by cultural trauma. Future testing must focus on whether these constant performative re-negotiations towards disruption and complexity produce real-life behavioural results – the way the dance of rapprochement between Phocaeans and Foçalıs has defied national narrative expectations on both sides of the Aegean, creating a blueprint for future coexistence. It's an exciting possibility.

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[2] https://legacy.lib.utexas.edu/maps/historical/shepherd_1911/shepherd-c-165.jpg [Accessed 20 January 2021]

[3] The term "Ottoman Greeks" (Έλληνες Οθωμανοί) might seem unfamiliar in non-academic Greek parlance, since Greek official history has always referred to "the Greeks" as a unified race *(γένος)* whether they be citizens of the independent Kingdom of Greece or the multi-ethnic Ottoman Empire, and *in contrast to* "the Ottomans" (Οθωμανοί), i.e. the Turks. But this Greek linguistic convention (which reflects post-Ottoman national dividing lines) is misleading, if not plain wrong: not all Greeks self-identified as Greek [see Kechriotis: 2005], nor where all Ottomans, Turks. In fact, Greeks self-identified in all sorts of Greek-related ways: as "*Hellenes", "Graikoi", "Romioi"*, or even plain "Orthodox Christian" [see the 19-21 January 2017 International Conference *Έλλην, Ρωμιός, Γραικός: Collective Identifications and Identities*, at the University of Athens: http://en.hellen-greek-romaios.internationalconference.arch.uoa.gr/fileadmin/arch.uoa.gr/uploads/secr/Ellin/abstracts_of_papers_eng.pdf [Accessed 21 January 2021]. In English-speaking academic circles however –both Greek and international– the term "Ottoman Greeks" is the accepted designation for those citizens of the Ottoman Empire who had a Greek cultural identity: Almost all bibliographical sources in English used in the present research employ this exact term (see for example: Akçam 2013; Sjöberg 2017). It is only in Greek that the term "Ottoman Greek" seems out of place; in Turkish such confusion does not exist, as citizens of the Ottoman state who were of Greek cultural and religious background are identified as *Rum*, a leftover from the word "Roman", as this was once part of the Eastern Roman (Byzantine) Empire whose language –Greek– they still spoke. The word is still used in Turkish today for Turkish citizens of Greek descent and of the Greek Orthodox faith. For a discussion that traces further the tensions between the terms "Έλληνες" (Greek) and "Ρωμιοί" (Rum) see the recently published E. GAZI. 2021. *Άγνωστη Χώρα: Ελλάδα και Δύση στις αρχές του 20ου αιώνα*, Athens: Polis Publishers.

[4] For more information on the *millets* and the history of their legal status with in the Empire, see Stamatopoulos, D. 2006. From Millets to Minorities in the 19th century Ottoman Empire: an Ambiguous Modernization, in S.G. ELIS, G. HALFADANARSON, A.K. ISAACS (Eds.) *Citizenship in Historical Perspective*. Pisa: Edizioni Plus-Pisa University Press, pp. 253-273

[5] Pdf pages 629-630/656 in the Official Ottoman Archives (*Arsiv Belgeleriyle Ermeni Faaliyetleri/ Cilt 1*) [no longer accessible online on the Archives' page, but accessible via Wikimedia @ https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Proportions_des_populations_en_Asie_Mineure_statistique_officielle_d1914.png [Accessed 20 January 2021]

[6] See Article 49 of the 1949 Geneva Convention

[7] Sklavou & Tatakis 2014

[8] Thalhofer is of course hardly the first one to recognise the intimate connection between linear narratives and challenge-overcoming. The great structuralist Claude Lévi-Strauss for example –influenced himself by Hegel– thought that human beings think fundamentally in terms of 'binary oppositions', i.e. struggles between opposing forces, and that the process of resolving such oppositions makes meaning possible (Levi-Strauss 1955). One can also hear echoes of the classic Aristotelian three-partite story-model (beginning/middle/end) in which the plot is driven forward by conflicts and the resolution thereof (see, for example, Alleyne 2015).

[9] I mentioned that I consider open-mindedness desirable, meaning obviously *morally* desirable. Does that make the complexity→open-mindedness argument an *ethical* argument? Am I deriving a prescriptive statement

("open-mindedness is morally desirable") from a descriptive one ("familiarization with complexity increases open-mindedness"), in a case of Hume's "is-ought problem"? No, I am not. If complexity breeds open-mindedness and open-mindedness is morally desirable, more complexity will of course result in the increase of *something* morally desirable. Yet it does *not* mean that the moral desirability of being open-minded is *derived* from the complexity of the world; the moral desirability of tolerance might derive from a moral *assumption* we might have about the nature of human beings, say. Also, it might still have existed *whether or not* the world was complex and *whether or not* familiarization with this complexity did in fact encourage open-mindedness. So no "is-ought" problem here. [For a very enjoyable treatment of Hume's paradox, see the Open University's relevant short video on YouTube: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=eT7yXG2aJdY]

[10] I'm not re-inventing the wheel, of course, but rarely do i-doc designers comment on evolving iterations of their projects and the design decisions behind them. Two exceptions are Norman Zafra, who admits that "[t]he post-production stage occurs side by side with web designing, digital content creation, and video editing" (Zafra 2020: 9) but then offers only a "post-textual" usability analysis of his *Obrero* online i-doc without going back to the drawing board; and Nardon et al. (2002), who systematically tested out the architecture of four different iterations of an experimental 13-scene i-doc they created, but whose conclusions (apart from the statistical methods) are, alas, ill-suited for any post-2020 study: their interface incorporated Real Audio, Netscape Navigator and Flash –all discontinued software). There's also Debra Beattie's excellent reflection on her own history documentary, *The Wrong Crowd*, which, in addition to being a bit outdated, cannot be read against the i-doc itself which is no longer available from the Australian Broadcasting Corporation's platform (Beattie 2008).

[11] Barthes (1977; originally published in 1967) argued that, since the only way we apprehend the world is through language, all the world is text which changes every time it is read. By implication, historians (like all authors – like *everyone*) have no control over the meaning of the world/the past other than the one they create for themselves. Barthes essentially "killed the historian" by arguing that a historian's view of history is as good as the next person's, and as weakly justifiable.

[12] A very readable introduction to the specific events of that summer can be found in T.G. OTTE's *July Crisis: The World's Descent into War, Summer 1914* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2014). For a more long-term picture of the politics of power leading to that boiling point, see C. GLARK. 2013. *The Sleepwalkers: How Europe went to war in 1914* (London: Penguin Books).

[13] The Manchester Guardian, June 29 1914, page 16. Last accessed on June 2nd 2018 on https://www.newspapers.com/image/259118525

[14] For a general view of violent population movements (instances of ethnic cleansing, pogroms, deportations, and persecutions) during the final two decades of the Ottoman Empire, see Gingeras (2016). For a more detailed account of the persecution of Muslim populations in the Balkans, see McCarthy (1995). For the persecution of Christians (incl. Greeks, Assyrians, and Armenians) see Akçam (2013).

[15] The difference is more significant than it may first appear: orchestration and systematized application is what makes the prosecution of Armenians a genocide, rather than collateral massacres to WWI.

[16] "The Turkish nationalist myth does not even acknowledge the previous existence of non-Turkish populations in the land which eventually became Turkey. […] official history managed to imply that the formation of the [Turkish] nation-state had returned Anatolia to its rightful heirs." (Keyder 2005: 6, 8)

[17] As mentioned before, this by no means suggests that all such ways are on an equal footing: there are stories which are clearly inaccurate.

[18] This, I admit, is my own epistemic bias, in line with the philosophical idea that individuals have their own subjective views of reality based on their own construction of meaning (Cresswell 2004). This is not the appropriate place to settle the debate on whether we can know with any certainty the true nature of the world –let alone represent it as such– but Wittgenstein (1958) has for a long time convinced me that *descriptions* of the world are *interpretations* of the world and, hence, do not correspond to anything 'out there': they *can't* be true or false without humans assigning truth-values to them. (Facts, on the other hand, *can*).

[19] It is generally accepted that the most celebrated of all *Annalistes* publications is Fernand Braudel's 1949 *La Méditerranée et le Monde Méditerranéen à l'Epoque de Philippe II* (most recent edition: 10th, 2017, by its original publisher, Arman Colin), a massive, 3-volume history of the Mediterranean sea, which sees this once Roman *mare nostrum* from as many different perspectives as the people who have inhabited it, and on three separate levels, from the largest to the most specific: its geological/environmental development; its cultural, social, and economic development; and finally the events that formed the societies around it.

[20] For a somewhat challenging –but still much more easily comprehensible than Ricœur's own– explanation of Ricœur's "metaphysics of narrative" see White (1984).

[21] I mentioned before that this thesis is similar to the one advanced by Wittgenstein (1958) but also other philosophical pragmatists –most recently, Paul Horwich (1998): namely, that the meaning of a proposition is derived from its use; and so, whatever knowledge we create and synthesize depends on man-made meanings. The main opponents of this view are philosophers who think that there exist innate ideas and that we can be capable of complex thoughts and planning without the use of language. Three of the most famous proponents of this thesis today are Jerry Fodor, Thomas Nagel, and Colin McGinn.

[22] Nash (2014), for example, presents the interesting response of a user of the interactive documentary *Bear 71* –which was designed to track the movements of a Banff National Park grizzly bear over 8 years, in order to understand her interactions with humans and other local animas– who created a whole (non-existent) scenario in which the i-doc was really about trapping and killing animals in what she saw as a "hunting range". None of this was intended by the designers of the i-doc, since the park is not a hunting range at all. Yet, as Fitzgibbons notes with regards to interactive texts, the user had sought to comprehend the artefact in a way that "meshed with her informational goal".

[23] This is exactly what Janet Murray meant by the "pleasure of participatory immersion": the pleasure a user gets out of learning to swim in new waters, to do the things that the new environment made possible. [Murray 1998]

[24] See Curran, A. 2001. Brecht's Criticisms of Aristotle's Aesthetics of Tragedy. *The Journal of Aesthetics and Art Criticism, 59*(2), pp. 167-184.

[25] Ryan erroneously suggests, when considering the loop-linked "maze" architecture, that "for a hypertext to tell a different story every time without losing narrative coherence, it would have to be organised on a tree structure that prevents loops" [2005]. Her error, I think, can be traced to her (and Lev Manovich's) understanding that narratives imply chronological and causal order. We argued earlier that coherence ("narrativization") does not necessitate causal or chronological order, but only intelligibility in terms of an informational goal [see p.37 of this document]. Her maze-like structure does indeed offer such intelligibility: the loops would simply drive a point home.

[26] History from Below: a term first used by Lucien Febvre of the *Annales* school but popularized by historian E.P. Thomson [Thomson 2000].

[27] For a definitive and comprehensive treatment of the definition, history, methods, advantages, and limitations of Oral History, see primarily Thomson, 2000.

[28] More commentary on the content of these interviews –and all interviews– can be found in the *Reflection & Conclusions* section of this document.

[29] My translation from the Greek, as it appeared on the Greek newspaper *Kathimerini* on Sunday, 5 May 2019. https://www.kathimerini.gr/opinion/interviews/1022211/to-ntokimanter-dimioyrgei-pragmatikotita/ (last accessed 24 January 2021).

[30] This lack of impact and UX studies for i-docs is also identified in Basaraba et. al [2020]

[31] And yet, in the *Appendix* section of this exegesis, you will find some extra thoughts on how the finalised product does largely fulfil Jacob Nielsen's 10 classic principles for interaction design – not because these

heuristics were part of the core architecture of *Phocaea 1914*, but because we made it a point to include them in the finalized product, as an extra gesture towards user friendliness and navigation ease.

[32] This has been noted in case studies involving interactive oral histories before. For instance, McRoberts reports that "although attempting to empower the participant, community-based oral history archives can be problematic, where, the stories are often unable to transcend the community from which they were produced, and can lead to what is described as a 'ghettoization of memory'." [McRoberts 2015: 3]

[33] Jakob Nielsen is fun to watch online. Here's his take on his Law of Internet UX: https://www.nngroup.com/videos/jakobs-law-internet-ux/ [Accessed April 2, 2021]

[34] Such as the interviews from refugee descendants in Nea Fokaia, which were thrice cancelled due to the coronavirus pandemic.

[35] See Davis 2001 & Foster 2001

[36] Indicatively, see Riley 1998 and Portal 1987

[37] Psychiatrist Daniel J. Siegel corroborates: emotion and repetition *retroactively* affect memories [Siegel 1999]. There is also another –more philosophical, less empirical– way to argue for the social construction of memory, which rests on our personal identity being (at least partially) a matter of social construction: I may be who I am by virtue of many things, but I am also who I am by virtue of the stories I tell myself about the things I *do not* remember, stories whose origin is outside me. I am surrounded by narratives that influence my diachronic sense of self.

[38] It is a taller order than one might think: from an official total of 119,822 in 1927 [official census of the Republic of Turkey 1927: 31] –*after* the Exchange of Populations– the *Rum* population of Turkey is today calculated at less than 2,200 people [OSCE 2014]. The major events that reduced it so have been the anti-minority tax policies in the 1940s (https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Varl%C4%B1k_Vergisi), the anti-Greek pogroms in 1955 (https://www.politico.eu/article/the-turkish-kristallnacht-greece-1955-pogrom-polites-orthodox/) and the forced expulsion of all Greek citizens from Istanbul in 1964 (https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Expulsion_of_Istanbul_Greeks).

[39] The law was updated to Article 301 in 2005, replacing any reference to "Turkishness" with "the Turkish nation". It's also made it illegal to insult Turkey, Turkish government institutions, and Turkish national heroes. Based on this law, cases have been brought against (amongst others) writers Orhan Pamuk, Elif Şafak, Perihan Mağden, the Turkish publishers of Noam Chomsky, and historian Taner Akçam, who is the most pivotal Turkish historian in unearthing documents that prove that the Armenian massacres of 2015 can legally be identified as genocide.

[40] The ancient Phocaeans, mariners extraordinaire, were the founders of a number of ancient Greek colonies in the Mediterranean, including Nice and Marseille in France, Empúries in Spain, and Elea/Velia in Italy.

[41] For an overview of the *monumental* centrality of the plight of Asia Minor in Greek literature, for example, see Peter Mackridge's "The Myth of Asia Minor in Greek Fiction" in Hirschon 2003: ch.17. In Greek politics, see Ploumidis 2016.

[42] Mainland Greeks had rebelled against the Ottoman Empire in 1821 and managed to establish an independent Greek state just 55 years before the letter was written.

[43] A picture of the letter can be found in Erol 2016: 251

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APPENDIX

Jakob Nielsen's' 10 UX heuristics for Interface Design [Nielsen 1994/2020] & how they are used in *Phocaea 1914*

	NIELSEN'S HEURISTICS	APPLICATION IN *PHOCAEA 1914*
1	The user should know at all times where they are	Highlight whichever part of the journey the user is currently at.

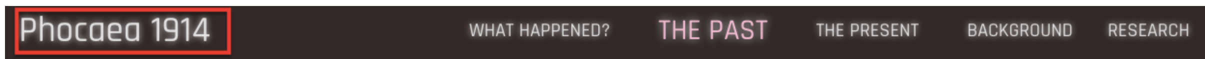
fig. 38 "Nielsen 1": The user is watching the Timeline of Events in the What Happened Section

*

	NIELSEN'S HEURISTICS	APPLICATION IN *PHOCAEA 1914*
2	The design should speak the user's language	Simply-named categories such as "What happened?"; "Why did it happen?"; "The Past"; "The Present", etc.

*

	NIELSEN'S HEURISTICS	APPLICATION IN *PHOCAEA 1914*
3	Users perform actions by mistake; they need emergency exits	There are multiple "exit strategies" available at all times within a single universe (for e.g. see fig. 28, p. 71 in this document), as well as a home button (Phocaea 1914) which takes users directly to the home page. Also a "Multimedia Index" button –which gives them access to *all* media in the i-doc, without them having to take a specific user journey to get there. There are "X" closing buttons to take users out of galleries and videos if necessary.



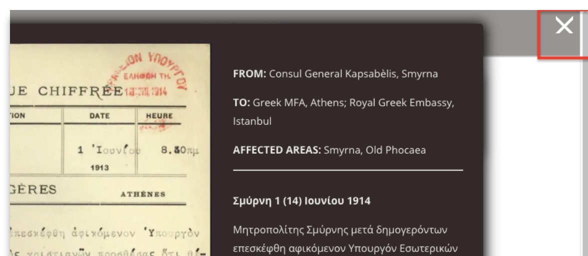


fig. 39 "Nielsen 3": Home Button on the Top Menu; Multimedia Index button on the Bottom Menu; "X" closing button for photographs, galleries, videos etc.

*

4	**NIELSEN'S HEURISTICS**	**APPLICATION IN *PHOCAEA 1914***
	Consistency: (or Jakob's Law of Internet UX) Mirror user's expectations shaped by other digital products. Keep consistent yourself.	Vertical playlists on the right-hand side of videos; "succession menus"; end cards/end screens; pop-up cards, etc. Replication of such interface in other categories.

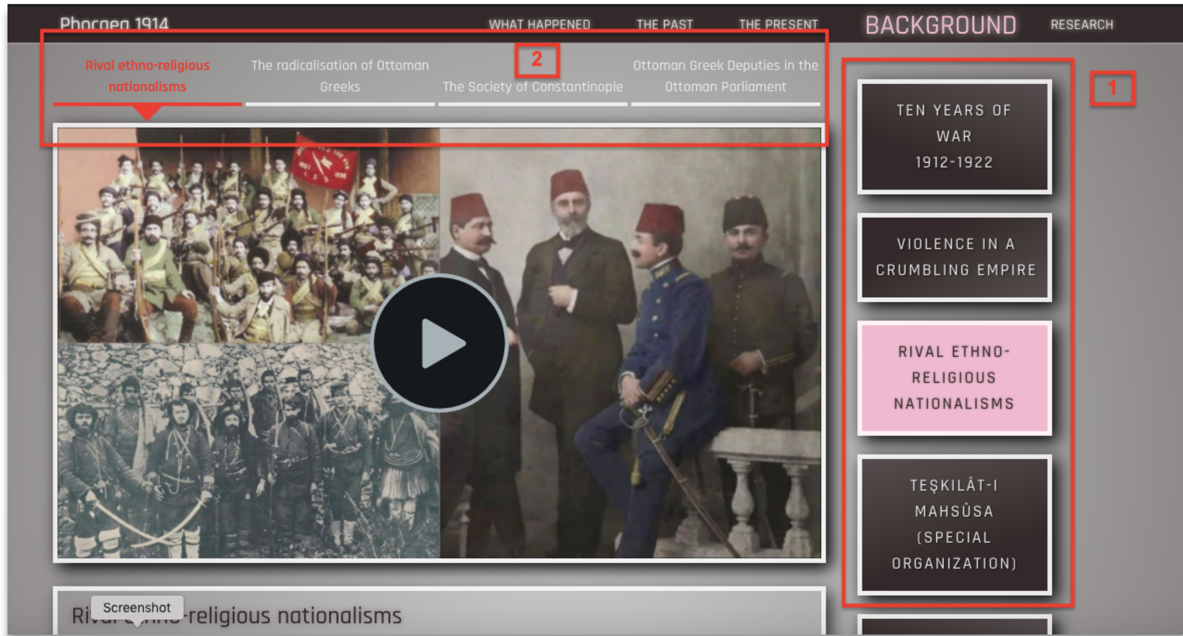


fig. 40 "Nielsen 4": Consistency in the interface for Historical Background:
Playlist Menu on right hand side [1]; succession menu on top [2].

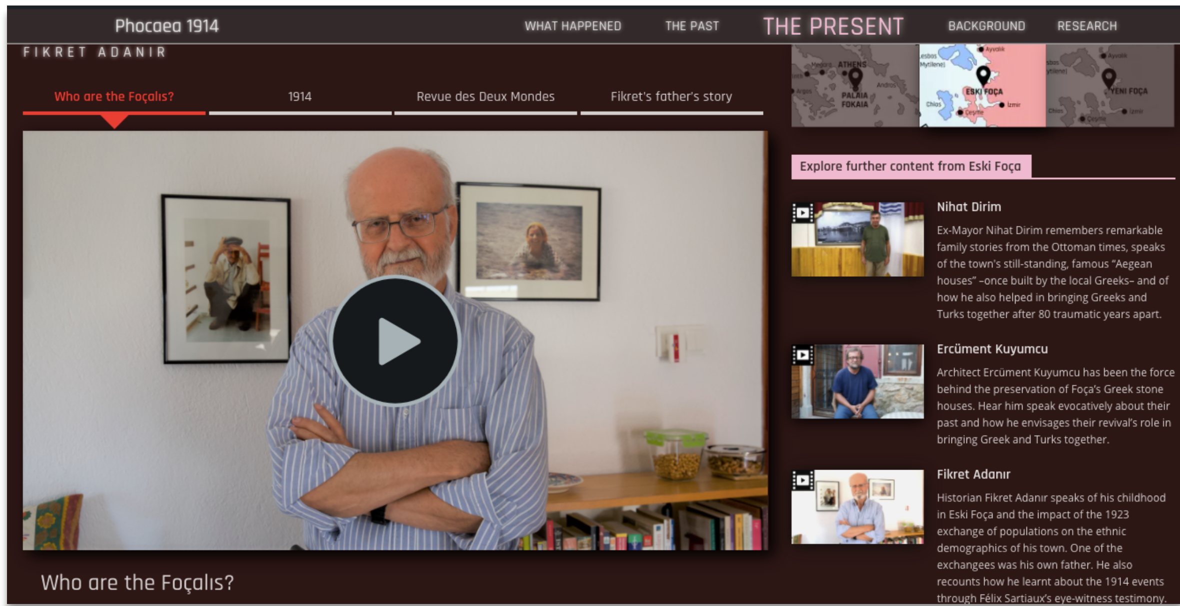


fig. 41 "Nielsen 4": Consistency in the interface for Present (Eski Foça)
Playlist Menu on right hand side]; succession menu on top.

*

	NIELSEN'S HEURISTICS	APPLICATION IN *PHOCAEA 1914*
5	Eliminate error-prone conditions through confirmation options	When linked items take you "outside" a microcosm, there are messages warning you that you are transferring to a different journey.

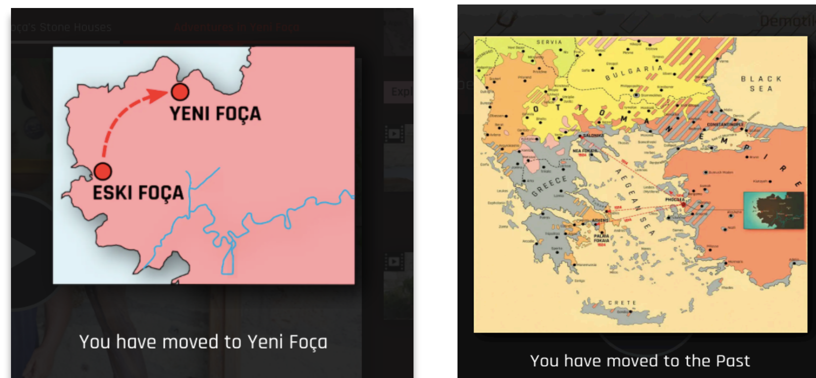
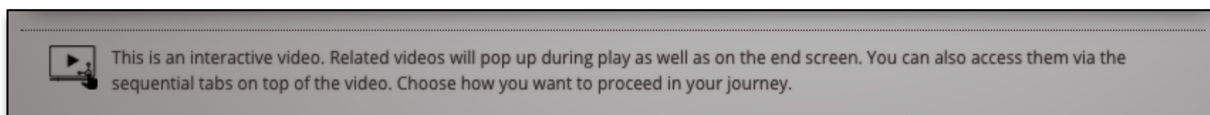


fig. 42 "Nielsen 5": Warning Messages. Left: the user is warned they've moved from the Eski Foça microcosm to the Yeni Foça one. Right: the user is warned they're moving into The Past category.

*

	NIELSEN'S HEURISTICS	APPLICATION IN *PHOCAEA 1914*
6	Recognition rather than recall: minimize users' memory load by providing clues (e.g. Google search prediction)	Under all interactive videos there's a message reminding the user that the video is interactive and leads onto other links, so that they do not miss important info.



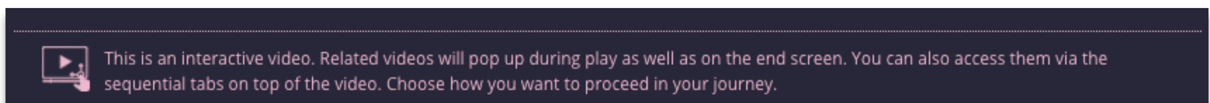


fig. 43 "Nielsen 6": "This is an interactive video" messages

*

	NIELSEN'S HEURISTICS	APPLICATION IN *PHOCAEA 1914*
7	Create Shortcuts for expert users / Allow users to tailor for frequent actions	The "Multimedia Index" button (see fig.37 above) is such a shortcut. So are secondary menus that pop up within universes so that one does not have to go back to the home page to change their journey:

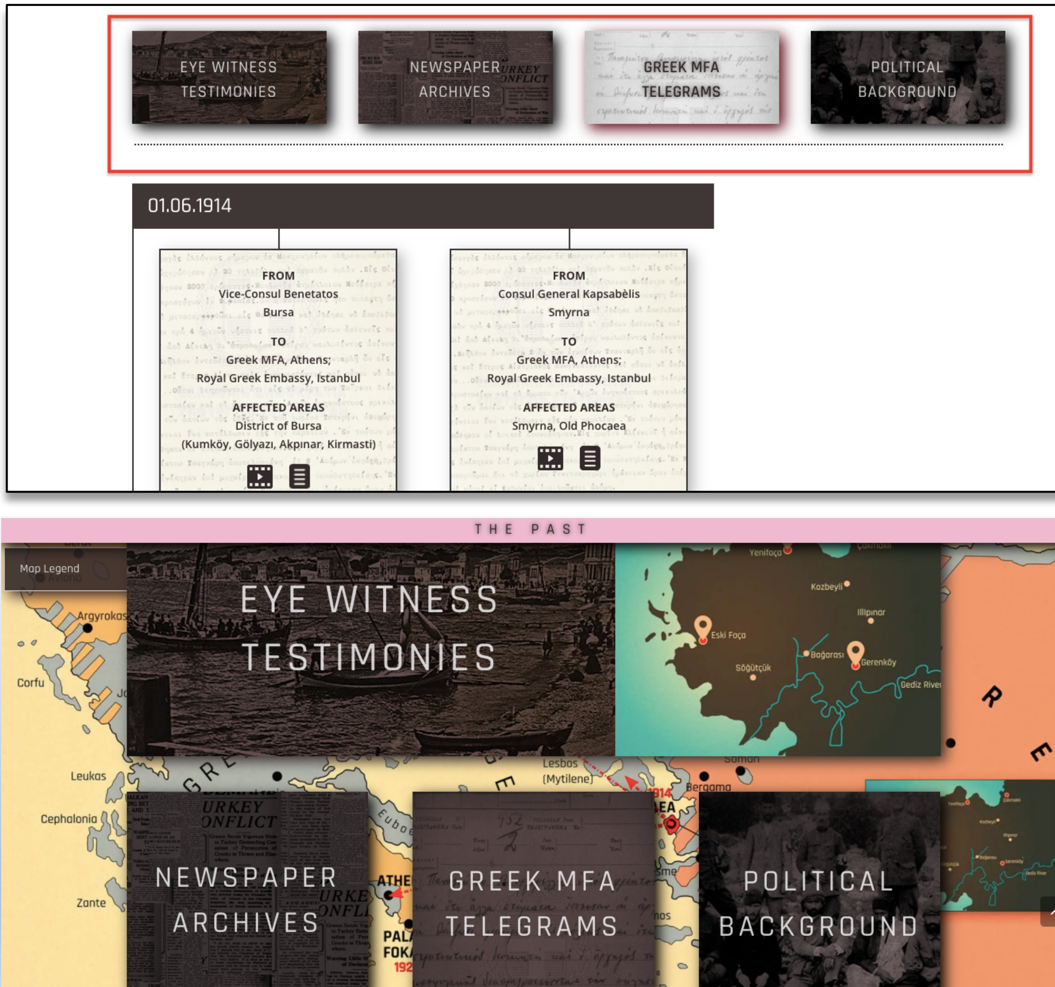


fig. 44 "Nielsen 7": Two ways of going about the same journey:
Top – from inside the Telegrams pag3e; Bottom – from the Past universe first page

*

	NIELSEN'S HEURISTICS	APPLICATION IN *PHOCAEA 1914*
8	A minimalist design	All command buttons and illustrations have been originally designed for *Phocaea 1914* with minimalist aesthetics

fig. 45 "Nielsen 8": Minimalist design for buttons and illustrations

*

9	NIELSEN'S HEURISTICS	APPLICATION IN *PHOCAEA 1914*
	Design error messages that offer clear solutions	N/A (There are no wrong ways to go about *Phocaea 1914)*

*

10	NIELSEN'S HEURISTICS	APPLICATION IN *PHOCAEA 1914*
	Ensure that any help documentation is easy to reach	Shortcut to a modified "navigational panel" (for its original iteration, see fig. 30, p.73, what was once the Landing Page) available at all times on Bottom Menu under the usually-encountered information button

fig. 46 "Nielsen 10": Info button leading to navigation tips

*

THE END