

THE PANHELLENIC STUDENT COMPETITION “HACK THE MAP: RIGAS’ CHARTA” - BUILDING A NEW EDUCATIONAL PARADIGM FOR GENERATION NEXT

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Abstract: *This paper presents the case of an innovative national digital student competition for school groups of secondary education, entitled: “Hack the Map: Rigas’ Charta”, which was conducted remotely in Greece during the school year 2020-2021 by the Onassis Foundation and the Onassis Library in collaboration with the General State Archives, the GSA-Cartographic Heritage Archives, and the Department of Geography of Harokopio University, Athens, with the approval of the Ministry of Education, and in the context of the “Protouvoulia 1821-2021” celebration events.*

The competition invited students from Greek High Schools in Greece and abroad, together with at least one educator, to bring to life one of the most emblematic maps of the 18th century, RigasVelestinlis’

Charta (Map) of Greece (1796-97), motivating them to use advanced digital tools to create projects of augmented reality, virtual reality, digital storytelling and 3D video games for PC and Android devices. This cooperative educational initiative developed an innovative educational model for teaching the lessons of history, geography, cartography and visual arts, by applying OBL (Object Based Learning), GBL (Game Based Learning) and PBL (Project Based Learning) methodologies.

Despite the difficulties the educational community encountered due to the Covid-19 pandemic, through this in

novative educational experience, students 13-17 years old managed to interact with cultural heritage materials in combination with advanced technology programs, open access plat

forms and interactive techniques. According to the assessment results, this learning approach offered a new educational paradigm, cultivating a positive attitude towards the learning procedure and unleashing the digital skills of new age learners.

Keywords: *Historical cartography, changing paradigm of education, VR/AR, 3D Video Game, Digital Storytelling, RigasVelestinlis’ Charta.*

INTRODUCTION

The Onassis Library is a historical library that contains collections of rare books and archives from the early Italian Renaissance (15th c.) to the Neo-Hellenic Enlightenment (19th c.) as well as a special collection of important editions, great works of art and historical objects dating just before the

Greek War of Independence. The Panhellenic Student Competition

“Hack the Map: Rigas' Charta” was designed, as a joint effort of many organizations, aiming at highlighting one of the most emblematic assets of the library, RigasVelestinlis' Charta (Map) of Greece (Vienna, 1796-1797).

The school teams participated in the competition had the opportunity to creatively combine the fields of informatics with those of history, geography, and visual arts, during a very difficult period for the educational community due to Covid-19 restrictions. In addition, they followed the process of conducting historical research, familiarized themselves with important elements of Greek cultural heritage, studied the iconographic wealth of a historical map, experienced distance learning, and acquired functional, structural, and strategic skillsets that could prove valuable for their later careers (Sofos, 2010).

The educational program “Hack the Map:

Rigas' Charta” was a good example of digital literacy, that succeeded to enhance the creative connection of ICT with other subjects of the school curriculum and apply online synchronous and asynchronous education.

Finally, it evolved to an incubator for preparing a new generation of citizens to face the challenges of a rapidly changing world.