



**GREEK ORAL HISTORY ASSOCIATION
DEPARTMENT OF HISTORY, ARCHEOLOGY AND SOCIAL
ANTHROPOLOGY, UNIVERSITY OF THESSALY**

**6th INTERNATIONAL ORAL HISTORY
CONFERENCE**

*Resistances and Contestations:
New Perspectives in Oral History*

Volos, 8-10 November 2024
Department of History, Archeology and Social Anthropology
University of Thessaly

Since the 1970s oral history has sought to uncover anti-hegemonic forms of memory and to function as a tool for social intervention. By placing centre-stage the lived experiences of common people, often forgotten by history, the study of multiple forms of resistance became key to the understanding of political action, subjectivity and power structures. The focus on resistance opened new fields of investigation for historical and ethnographic approaches beyond the field of political theory. Studies began to look for resistance in previously unexplored areas and to question definitions of resistance which had previously been taken for granted. Attention shifted to 'everyday acts of resistance' and forms of disobedience undermining existing power structures that went unnoticed by the rulers but empowered the subordinates. At the same time, a new focus on subjectivity, emotions and embodied and affective experiences offered new opportunities to understand explicit and implicit forms of contestation that were not voiced in purely political terms.

Following these lines of reflection, the conference focuses on the concepts of resistance and contestation: how can we rethink these concepts through the study of oral memory and biographical narratives? In what

ways do oral biographical narratives challenge or complicate hegemonic master narratives? What new forms of agency are emerging, what kind of power structures do they challenge, how is embodied experience transformed into narration, and what are the resistances we face in our own practices as oral historians?

In our concern to highlight oral history as a field in which new conceptualizations of resistance can be produced, we propose the following themes:

Resistance as a form of action

Forms of action confronting different regimes of political governance
Challenges to social, economic and patriarchal power structures
Resistances in everyday life

Resistance and collective memory

Collective memory as resistance
Challenging collective memory
Anti-heroic narratives and the marginalization of groups in collective memory
Resisting the silencing and erasure of memory

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Resistance as lived experience

“Definitions” and conceptualizations of resistance in oral narratives
Individual experiences and collective forms of actions in different historical contexts.
Emotions linked to the participation in resistance activities
Resistances, contestations and biographical trajectories

Resistance as an act of communication

Narrators’ strategies structuring narratives about resistance
Power relations and forms of resistance that shape the interview
The concept of resistance as a tool for researchers’ self-reflexivity: are there any blind spots that were not perceived as resistances and can be read differently in retrospect?

The languages of the conference are Greek and English. Those interested in participating in the conference should send a **short cv, a title and a 250-word abstract** of the proposed paper by **30 June 2024** to both antoniou120@yahoo.gr and hantzaro@aegean.gr

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