

**MANAGEMENT AND INFORMATION OF RISKS AND DISASTERS IN
MUSEUMS:
CASE STUDY: A DISASTER PLAN OF MUSEUM OF BYZANTINE
CULTURE OF THESSALONIKI**

The protection of World Cultural Heritage is one of the most important issues of our time not only during wartime, but also in peacetime. Nowadays, Cultural Heritage faces a number of great natural and human risks that could cause damages and losses to a significant amount of cultural objects of great importance. In this paper, we explore the issue of managing and preventing risks and disasters in museums in our time. Primarily, we provide all essential definitions about what Heritage Property is and we try to define the value of this property in our society. Then, we present the institutional framework with regard to the protection of cultural heritage as defined by international organizations, such as ICOM/UNESCO, EU, Council of Europe and national bodies. In addition, we clarify the terms, risk and disaster in a museum, either they are referred to natural risks, such as fire, floods, earthquakes and storms, or caused by human activity, such as wars, bomb threats, terrorism, vandalism etc. In relation to the protection of the cultural heritage, we describe the case study of Museum of Byzantine Culture of Thessaloniki, which was awarded the Council of Europe's Museum Prize for the year 2005 for "the excellence of the museum and the balance between conservation, restoration and presentation". In this context, we attempt to build an Emergency Disaster Plan in order to protect our great cultural property and develop an appropriate plan to suggest practical solutions to technical problems faced in protecting collections and buildings in emergency situations.

Keywords: risk, human risks, natural risks, risk management, cultural heritage, conservation, prevention, disaster, disaster plan

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