Chapter 2
Geographical Information System Applications Utilized in Museums in Turkey Within the Scope of the Cultural Heritage Tourism: A Case Study of Mobile Application of Müze Asist

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ABSTRACT
Technology has penetrated every aspect of life and it proceeds with the aim of facilitating people’s lives. Geographical information systems as a part of the developing technology provide services in every area with different forms. One of these areas is museology. The desire to make visual and written information and cultural heritage that are presented by museums with auditory and interactive experiences has brought together digital technologies and cultural and historical activities. From this point of view, the “Müze Asist” is a remarkable application in terms of the fact that it is a local app and in use in most of the museums in Turkey and the convenience provided for all tourists who want to visit a museum, especially for those who prefer self-guided tours. This chapter may be a guide to its objects and to the next researchers.

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INTRODUCTION

Cultural heritage tourism is type of tourism concentrated on visiting artifacts, historical buildings, monuments and art objects inherited from various cultures, which could not be manufactured once again and which reflect characteristics of a certain society. Geographical Information System (GIS) is a tool allowing today’s users to access and handle information conveniently and efficiently. Owing to the advantages of the GIS, everyday various new GIS applications are introduced and find themselves a new application area such that millions of applications increase progressively and serve millions of individuals for different purposes. Museum is one of these areas. Museums are the places first come to mind as areas for exhibition of inherited artifacts within the cultural heritage and they are frequently visited by tourists. On the other hand, tourists participated in cultural heritage tourism do not always tend to travel in a tourist groups leaded by a tourist guide. There are also individuals who plan their personal travel route, organize their accommodation, dining needs, and who prefer to move independently along their travel. These individuals are capable of performing operations such as navigation, buying travel tickets, hotel reservation by means of smart phones, tablets and mobile PCs. The only necessity for these operations is internet. The “Müze Asist” application was designed for all tourists and especially for solitary travelers enjoying independency in their journey, which could operate on smart phones, tablets and PCs of individuals. This application functions as a travel guide accessible from the digital environment, which provide information, details, images, videos with voice explanations of artifacts, especially for museums, other cultural and art establishments. This research on the “Müze Asist” one of the geographical information system applications used in museums in Turkey within the scope of cultural heritage tourism, has been prepared by analyzing the content of the web site of the “Müze Asist” application, using the “Müze Asist” application on a smart phone with an Android operating system and making a literature review. It is aimed to make a contribution to the existing literature.

CONCEPT OF CULTURAL HERITAGE

Culture; is defined as the whole of material and spiritual values created in the process of historical and social development and the means showing the measures of the sovereignty over the natural and social environment of man, which is used to create and transmit those values to the next generation (Turkish Language Society, n.d.). According to another definition, culture is the way of life and thought that constitutes its identity with its own art, beliefs, customs, understanding, and behaviors that make a society different from other societies and continue to change in time. It is the whole
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