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Ex Novo Journal of Archaeology

Volume 7, December 2022

CONTENTS

Martina REVELLO LAMI, Jesus GARCIA SÁNCHEZ & Maja GORI <i>Foreword</i>	1
Jagoba HIDALGO-MASA <i>Crossed presents. Iron Age as a driving force in the construction of the current Basque political reality</i>	5
Stavros OIKONOMIDIS <i>Dido's foundation legend, archetypes of foundation myths in Eurasia and Neomythology in the nineteenth century Balkans</i>	23
Claudio CAVAZZUTI <i>Brexit, la "rivolta populista" e il futuro dell'archeologia</i>	57
Alessandro PINTUCCI <i>Tutto l'ambaradan intorno alla rimozione dei monumenti agli schiavisti: Critica (un po') ragionata</i>	65
Francesca DELL'ERA <i>Di tutela, immondizia e nomadismo. Riflessioni a margine di una sorveglianza archeologica in corso d'opera</i>	77
Emiliano BARLETTA & Alessio LO MANTO <i>Archaeology & Comics</i>	95

Foreword

Martina Revello Lami, Jesus Garcia Sánchez & Maja Gori

Ex Novo Editorial Board

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Unravelling threads of time: Intersections of archaeology, myth, and identity

Welcome to the seventh volume of the Ex Novo-Journal of Archaeology, which presents a tapestry woven from diverse scholarly threads, offering insights into the intricate relationships between history, myth, contemporary identity, and activism.

The contributions within this edition converge at the crossroads of time, where the echoes of ancient civilizations reverberate through the narratives shaping our present reality. They encapsulate the spirit of archaeology as a multifaceted discipline, intertwining past narratives with contemporary reflections on nationalism and societal constructs.

Jagoba Hidalgo's exploration in "*Crossed presents. Iron Age as a driving force in the construction of the current Basque political reality*" delves deep into the interconnectedness of historical epochs, revealing how the Basque present is woven from diverse historical threads. This paper illuminates the complexities of constructing modern Basque identity upon archaeological foundations, despite the scarcity of material evidence from the Iron Age.

Stavros Oikonomidis guides us through the enduring echoes of ancient myths in "*Dido's foundation legend, archetypes of foundation myths in Eurasia and Neomythology in the nineteenth century Balkans*." The persistence of the Didonian archetype across diverse geographies and its re-emergence in the foundation of Naoussa in nineteenth-century Greece offers a captivating exploration of how ancient legends continue to shape contemporary narratives.

Over the past two years, Ex Novo has undergone several changes, the first being the migration from our website to Archaeopress' OJS platform for the early edition of papers in digital format. The transition was not uneventful, but we believe that this is the right choice. All issues published so far have therefore been transferred to the new website and given a DOI. The original Ex Novo site, which hosts not just our volumes but additional, more interactive content, will remain online for the moment. Over the years, we have published on our website several short essays in the form of blog posts and in order not to lose the memory of our own past, we have decided to include in the present issue also those think-pieces, which focus particularly on the relationship between the past and

present society.

Claudio Cavazzuti's blog entry on Brexit (2018) and the future of archaeology, along with Alessandro Pintucci's critical analysis of monument removals (2020), interjected timely discussions into the socio-political realm of archaeology. These entries provoke contemplation on the intersection of heritage, politics, and public discourse, and underline the transformative nature of Archaeological thought two of the most relevant events in Europe in recent years.

For the first time this issue hosts a less traditional output, photo-narrative authored by Francesca Dell'Era. This poignant contribution transports us to the Collatino neighbourhood of Rome, where an archaeological excavation becomes a lens through which societal disparities and the coexistence of ancient remnants and contemporary settlements are starkly juxtaposed. Dell'Era's reflection goes beyond mental and physical boundaries of a mere technical excavation, inviting readers to contemplate the social dynamics intertwined with archaeological endeavors.

The volume culminates with Emiliano Barletta & Alessio Lo Manto's innovative approach in "Archaeology & Comics" (2018) presenting archaeology in the form of a graphic novel. This creative endeavour aims to bridge academic knowledge with public engagement, inviting a wider audience into the world of archaeological exploration without surrounding its scientific and critical side or as the authors said explicitly "As in the equation comic book/kids, confining archaeology to a non-science on the edge of improvisation is evidently wrong". As for the contributions by Pintucci and Cavazzuti, the graphic novel by Barletta and Lo Manto is still available online on our original website.

As editors, we extend our deepest gratitude to the authors for their invaluable contributions, which enrich our understanding of the intricate layers comprising the human story. We invite readers to immerse themselves in this diverse array of scholarly insights, each offering a unique glimpse into the interwoven fabric of our shared past and present through very different styles, from more traditional scientific papers to powerful image-driven narratives.

Acknowledgments

The present volume would not have been released without the fundamental effort of all reviewers involved in the process. In addition, we are indebted to Francesca Dell'Era, who shared an evocative photo for the cover of the online version of this issue that captures a dramatic moment during the dismantling of a Roma camp at the periphery of Rome.



Figure 1. Italianità acquisita – Becoming Italian (photo credits @ Francesca Dell’Era)

Crossed presents. Iron Age as a driving force in the construction of the current Basque political reality.

Jagoba Hidalgo-Masa

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Abstract

Our present is the ultimate result of the interconnection of different presents. Presents that combine characteristics of different historical periods to create a social reality experienced by Basque people. In the Basque Country, the past is not only interconnected with the present realm, but they also coexist on a daily basis, to form a legal, fiscal, social and economic reality that discursively goes back to the Late Iron, and its Age. The present paper aims to offer a different insight into how modern Basque identity has been constructed upon archaeological and historical basis. It is crucial to analyse what sort of archaeological data sustains such identity and narratives.

Bearing these pre-Roman natives in mind, one might think that the material reality available in the Basque Country from the Iron Age is rich, abundant and capable of articulating a discourse that still maintains an influence today. This deduction could not be more wrong since, we hardly have enough data to characterise the settlement pattern of this chronology for the Basque case, and more specifically for its Atlantic side where the province of Gipuzkoa is located. In other words, even with a limited material background, unevenly distributed throughout the territory, the Iron Age is part of many current discourses about Basque identity.

Keywords

Iron Age, Basque Country, Symmetrical Archaeology, Crossed Presents.

Introduction

This article aims to focus on the different processes that shaped Basque identity construction in collective memory, concretizing the analysis on the Iron Age and the narratives that emerged around particular objects from this period, in which some national/regional narratives about identity place their founding moment, as in the case of Cantabria (García Sánchez 2009, 2016), Asturias (Marín Suárez 2004, 2005), Galicia (Díaz Santana 2002), France (Dietler 1994) or Ireland (Cooney & Grogan 1991). To achieve this, the essential conceptual elements will be introduced in the first section, followed by an analysis of the current Basque present, since it is from here that we build the different presents. After that, the Basque Iron Age will be analysed, highlighting the elements of this period which, with a reconfigured narrative, are still with us. Finally, considering the concept of *crossed presents*, we will analyse how the narratives of these Iron Age elements have been reconfigured up to the present day.

Time: a stratification of different presents

We wake up, we get dressed, and throughout the day we carry out a series of tasks while constantly in contact with various objects that accompany us daily. Objects that in most cases were conceived thousands of days ago, in contexts where social, economic, or cultural realities were structured in other coordinates, i.e., in another present (Olivier 2004). But even so, the need to which they were trying to respond with their creation is still latent today, maintaining their practicality and usefulness. In other words, we wake up, get dressed, and are in direct contact with different traces of time inscribed in today's social materiality (Olivier 2020).

These traces contain the memory of their time, becoming the object of study for archaeologists (González-Ruibal 2007). However, memory tends to disintegrate, disappear and be forgotten, with change being the backbone of the act of forgetting. Repetition and reiteration acts as containment of forgetting, constantly re-signifying ideas and objects, that is to say, endowing them with new collective memory. Nevertheless, memory is only accessible here and now, in the present, since, in the words of Olivier (2020: 36): “*What remains of the past are ruins and detritus that time (the present in the making) never ceases to accumulate and crush*”.

Therefore, we are called upon to reinterpret the traces of the collective memory of different times that have come down to us. By doing this, innovation and tradition combine in different ways, providing those traces with new memory (Tamm & Olivier 2019). In view of the fact that memory is forgetful, and, that if it is not constantly reaffirmed by memories it might end up encapsulated, enclosed and disappeared, as what happened to Pompeii, waiting for someone to come across it (Cianciolo 2018), re-signifying it again.

In conclusion, our present is the ultimate result of the stratification of traces, narratives and memories that have managed to survive through time and through a process of transformation (Witmore 2007). This process allows such disparate presents as Lipovetsky's hypermodern times (Lipovetsky 2014) and Iron Age societies to intersect with each other in a bidirectional way. For example, Iron Age symbols are readapted and come to structure the cultural symbolisms of the people,

as is the case of the region of Soria (Castilla y León) (Ruiz Zapatero 2002) in the Iberian Peninsula, which has taken as a symbol of a horse-shaped fibulae from the archaeological site of Numancia (Garray, Soria), a fortified settlement dating from the Iron Age that turned as a symbol of the resistance of the Celtiberian people against the arrival of Rome. This symbolism is based on ancient citations and evidence of a Roman Republican siege (Jimeno Martínez & De la Torre Echávarri 2005).

The Basque Country today

The Basque territory, the territory where the Basque language is spoken, is located west of the Pyrenees, between the current states of France and Spain. However, it is not a unified reality as it is organised into three administrative realities: Euskadi or Basque Country, the westernmost region, made up of the provinces of Araba, Bizkaia and Gipuzkoa; Navarre or Nafarroa, the eastern region; and the French Basque Country or Iparralde, which, unlike the other two, does not have an administration but is located in the French region of the Pyrénées-Atlantiques. The present paper will focus on the western region, Euskadi and more specifically, the province of Gipuzkoa. Gipuzkoa is formed by a landscape structured by an abrupt orography, cut through by short but very fast-flowing rivers that form narrow valleys (Fig. 1).

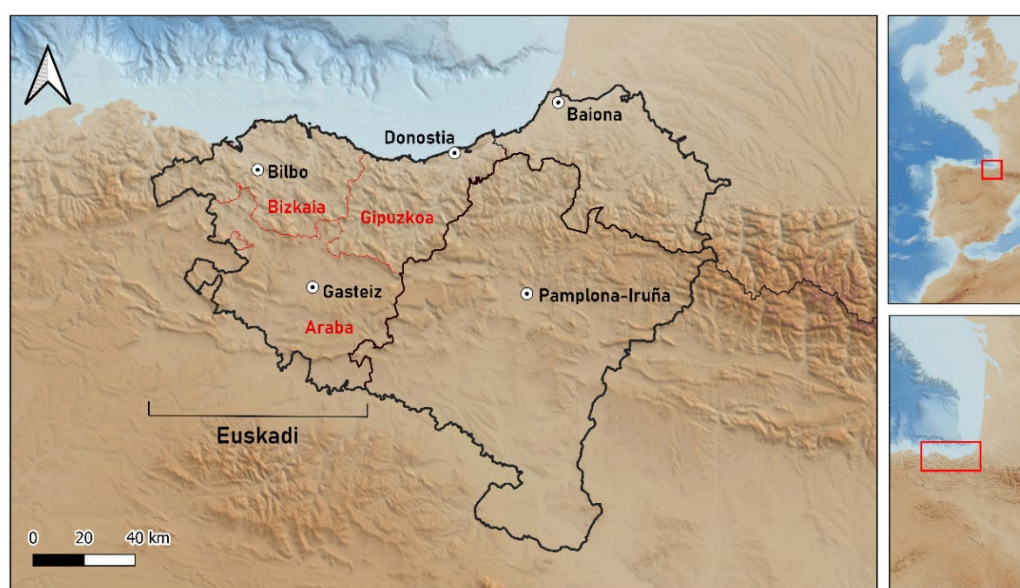


Figure 1. Location of the Basque Country and Euskadi, together with its provinces. Author: J. Hidalgo-Masa.

As in most of today's human landscapes, in the Basque Country, people coexist daily with many different temporal realities. Proof of this is the landscape, which corresponds to the Lea River valley as it passes through Aulesti (Bizkaia) (Fig. 2). In this valley, we might encounter elements belonging to different periods forming a homogeneous landscape. Among those we count, a fortified settlement from the

Iron Age small scattered population centres that can be traced back to the process of formation of medieval villages in the eighth-ninth century (Martín Viso 2016), as well as the appearance of *baserris*¹ or farmhouses in the fifteenth century (Tellería Julian et al. 2020) and eventually, the current population centre, which is located at the bottom of the valley. This pattern of settlement was standardised and systematised in the Early Middle Ages when these environments became fully habitable (García Camino 2003). Another element with a notorious presence in this landscape is the forest plantations of American pine (*Pinus ponderosa*), which were introduced in the 1940s (Fig. 2). In short, this landscape of Aulesti (Bizkaia) is the result of the ideological, social, economic, etc. needs of its time. It contains some of the most representative elements of most of the Basque Atlantic valleys, without forgetting, for example, the late medieval tower houses, the modern plots, or the contemporary industries, among many other elements.

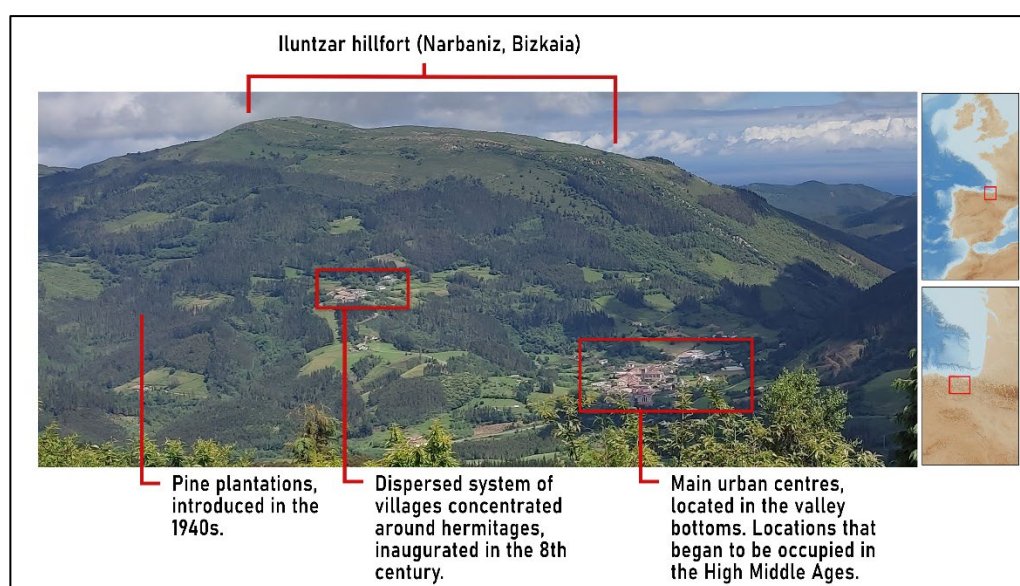


Figure 2. The different types of presents that form the landscape of a large part of the Basque area. Author: J. Hidalgo-Masa.

Ideas or ideologies, like landscapes, are palimpsests with a long-time span. Current Basque politics are a good example of this, as the Basque political-administrative reality is the result of a very convulsive nineteenth and twentieth centuries, as we shall see below. In the nineteenth century there was a transition from a conservative and deeply Christian society, with a solid rural aristocracy that based its power on certain privileges, to a strongly industrialised society with a liberal social model (Valdalisio Gago 2013). Nevertheless, this transition was the result of two wars, the First Carlist War (1833-1840) and the Second Carlist Wars (1872-1876), between the rural aristocracies and the regime of the Hispanic Monarchy, which tried to accelerate the liberalising processes. In addition, common property lands were expropriated, the landscape was industrialised with foreign and national capital, and

¹ A country house that combines in a single structure, productive activities such as the apple press for the production of cider, with living spaces.

the cities experienced a demographic growth (Rubio Pobes 1996). All this altered and transformed the day-to-day life of a society which, under the influence of romanticism and the feeling of loss, due to the Carlist defeats in the 19th century wars in which a large part of society fought alongside the Carlists, was driven to a strong national sentiment (Rubio Pobes 2003). This feeling was reflected in the political pretensions of a local elite, which, with the profits from industry, strengthened its position and formed the Basque Nationalist Party (EAJ-PNV), together with part of society. The 20th century merely continued the dynamics of the 19th century, a Civil War (1936-1939), the prohibition of Basque culture and language under Franco's fascist dictatorship, a strong post-war reindustrialisation and the consequent attraction of labour from all over the state, with strong migrations, laid the foundations for the so-called Basque armed conflict, between Euskadi Ta Askatasuna (ETA) and the Spanish State, in the second half of the 20th century. The conflict, which began in clear opposition to Franco's regime and due to the repression, he exercised, was later transformed into a conflict for the independence of the Basque Country and the establishment of a socialist state, as ETA's ultimate aspiration.

The Iron Age, a not-so-distant reality

Among all the different presents that still echo in the Basque Country, the Iron Age is perhaps the oldest and most enigmatic one. The Iron Age in the present-day territory of the Atlantic Basque Country dates, as well as other neighbouring regions, from the first millennium BC, specifically from 800 to the second half of the first century BC (Jordá-Pardo et al. 2009). The Iron Age is usually characterised by the standardisation and expansion of settlements patterns located at a high altitude and defended by a defensive system adapted to the conditions of the environment, from which strategic areas of the surrounding landscape are controlled (Parcero Oubiña, 2002), such as cultivation areas, strategic passes, etc. Multiple factors can explain this need for fortification. However, perhaps one of the arguments that have gained more relevance is the destabilisation and consequent crisis of the Bronze Age social model, which forced these societies to a substantial reconfiguration of many of their characteristics (Ayán Vila 2013, Parcero Oubiña et al. 2017). In the Basque Country the settlement pattern repeats certain characteristics, such as the fact that most of the settlements are date to in the Late Iron Age, the second half of the first millennium BC, unlike in other Atlantic regions such as Galicia where this pattern extends into First Iron Age (Parcero Oubiña et al. 2017, González-Ruibal 2008). This fact may be explained by a more remarkable survival of the Bronze Age social moulds, an example of which is the use of earlier funerary rites such as the deposition of ashes in cromlechs² (Edeso Fito et al. 2016) or the low-density

² The cromlechs are circular megalithic structures made up of a series of sunken stones. In the Basque Country they are located in mountainous areas, especially in the pre-Pyrenees, and have a long chronology. Finally, they have been related to funerary use due to the discovery of ashes in several of them, although they are also related to the farming and symbolic world, being considered marker milestones (Mujika 2017).

network of sites per square kilometre that was articulated from Late Iron Age onwards (Fig. 3).

Even so, by the middle of the first millennium BC, there was a network of settlements irregularly distributed throughout Euskadi, which generated significant voids that still need to be studied. These settlements are located at an average altitude of 400 metres above sea level, have an area of between 2 and 3 ha and are delimited by these structures that combine natural and artificial defences (Hidalgo-Masa 2020). However, their number is considerably reduced, as mentioned above, since we know of 19 confirmed³ settlements in the Atlantic area of Euskadi, a figure representing a density of 0.0055 sites per square kilometre. Meanwhile, in other parts of the Cantabrian coast (Iberian Peninsula), there is a higher level of hillfort concentrated in a single region or basin, such as the region of Ortigueira (A Coruña, Galicia) (Fábrega Álvarez 2004), the Besaya-Pas river basin (Cantabria) (Serna Gancedo et al. 2010) or the Eo-Navia region (Asturias) (Camino Mayor 1995). However, these clusters are combined with spaces that are poorly represented, such as the far east of Cantabria (Serna Gancedo et al. 2010) or Asturias (Camino Mayor 1995), among others, a dynamic in which the Atlantic Basque Country seems to be a part of as well.

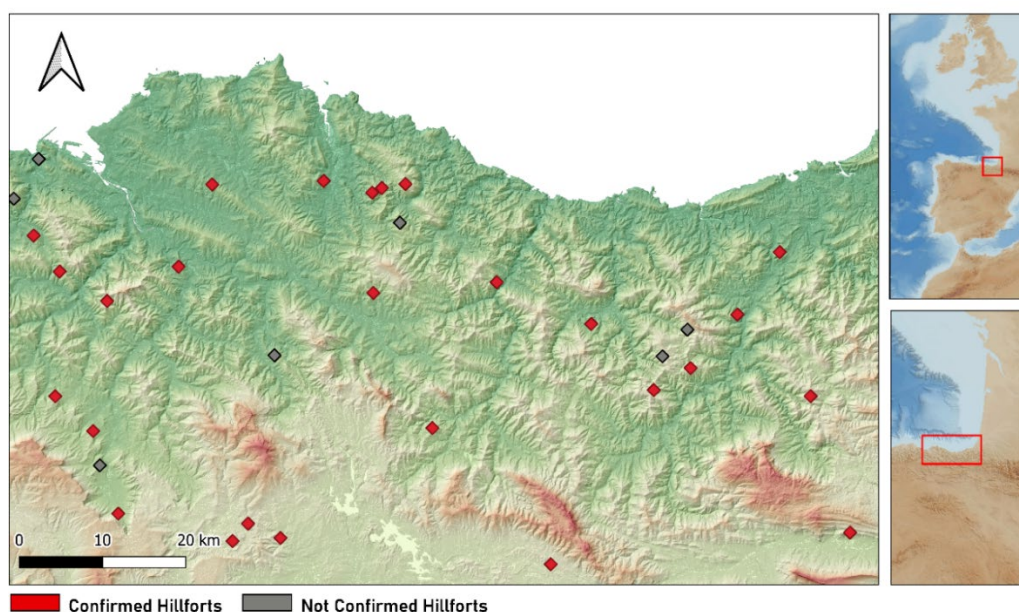


Figure 3. Dispersion of hillforts in part of the Basque Country. Author: J. Hidalgo-Masa.

In addition, we do not have much information about secondary sites, such as necropolises or productive areas. In short, the Basque Iron Age sites are ill-represented, especially if we consider the existence of twenty-five catalogued Palaeolithic sites, according to the official site catalogue *Ondarearen*, materiality that tends to be more difficult to detect, so it may be that processes such as reforestation and its negative impact on these sites are behind this figure. This issue may once

³ Hillforts that the author considers to be confirmed by their morphological and geographical characteristics and the associated materiality.

again be an example of the fact that the past can only be accessed from the present (Olivier 2020). During the last decades researchers have focused mainly on the study of the Palaeolithic and the Middle Ages, perhaps due to the conscious or unconscious importance that these chronologies have acquired in the construction of Basque identity (Ruiz Zapatero 2006).

The lack of data is a constant that is repeated in archaeology in different periods and locations, so it is not strange that a specific moment in Basque history is under-represented, but what is strange is that even with a lack of data and latent knowledge, the Iron Age in the Basque Country continues to have a certain prominence when it comes to constructing certain devices, in the Foucauldian sense of the word (Agamben 2015). This is because certain present moments have a unique *Kairos*,⁴ in which specific processes take place that can't be easily forgotten. On the contrary, these processes lead to dynamics that impact future present moments. One of these moments is the Iron Age, because this is the time when the main historical peoples emerged, and the current societies are projecting their identities on (Ruiz Zapatero 2006, Woolf 2011). This is the case of the Celtic people's relationship with Scotland or Ireland, whose identity developed, to a certain extent, in opposition to the English identity tied up with the Roman world (Morrison 2001). A similar process is taking place in the Spanish State, in which the Iron Age acquires a singular relevance, especially after the establishment of the current constitutional regime (1978), which is composed by regions/nationalities with autonomous competences that seek historical legitimation for their new mandates (Alonso González & González Álvarez 2013, González Morales 1994). This, along with previous ideological traditions, such as the Galician nationalism, which has its roots in the nineteenth century (Díaz Santana 2002), or the Asturian regionalism in the early twentieth century (Marín Suárez 2004), leads to promoting national historical-identitarian devices. These narratives are based on the Iron Age Celticism, and the idea of resistance or survival, which are deeply rooted in Europe (Dietler 2006). In the Basque Country, the Celtic world is not considered to be the founding moment of identity. In fact, pre-Indo-European times, maybe Palaeolithic (Ruiz Zapatero 2006, Peñalver Iribarren 2005), were considered the origins of Euskera or Basque, thus used as referential moment for Basque identity. Perhaps this is why there has been a particular predilection for the Palaeolithic period from a considerable number of Basque researchers. Therefore, the people from the Iron Age can be considered the heirs of this linguistic tradition. Concretely, the *Vascones* (Sayas Abengoechea 1999), from which comes the name of the language, Basque, or the name of the territory, Basque Country, and which goes back to the ethnonym cited by classical authors such as Strabo or Ptolemy (Andreu Pintado et al. 2009) and which could be located in a territory similar to the current region of Nafarroa (Wulff 2009, Almagro Gorbea 2005).

Beyond a particular toponymic or sociological survival, the Iron Age is present in our lives in many ways that we do not perceive. A clear example of this phenomenon

⁴ Kairos is a concept from Greek philosophy that represents an indeterminate period of time in which something important happens.

can be found in the symbolism of current European societies. These symbols, which in many cases could be called solar symbols, expressed the movement of the sun, alluding to the need to monitor the various vicissitudes of the weather in an agricultural production model that was highly dependent technically on the weather. It was proposed by some scholars that solar symbols spread throughout Eurasia and were adopted by local elites (González-Ruibal 2012) since many of these societies had similar technological means and, therefore, similar climatological conditions. Consequently, they were the backbone of the worldview of their period and perhaps due to their relevance they endured over time, combining and adapting to the new social realities. It is worth noting that although these symbols continued to be used during the Middle Ages and especially in the Modern Age (De Pablo Contreras 2009) it was in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries that these symbols were recovered and reintroduced into the social scene by historians, artists, archaeologists and politicians who, under the influence of romanticism and nationalism, sought the roots of their respective peoples in these symbols (Díaz-Andreu 1995). So much so that Nazism, one of the main ideologies of the twentieth century, adopted one of these symbols, the *swastika*, as the representation of its ideology (Arnold 1990). In the Iberian Peninsula this process also had an echo. It is common to find symbols such as *triskele*, or similar, related to the national identity of historical Atlantic peoples such as the Galician (González-Ruibal 2012, Díaz Santana 2002), the Asturian (Marín Suarez 2004, Marín Suarez et al. 2012) or the Cantabrian where it is common to see symbols, solar or not, of the so-called giant stelae of Cantabria from the Iron Age (García Sánchez, 2009) on the political scene. In the Basque Country, this trend also had a significant influence and authors such as the artist Jorge Oteiza Embil, sought the essence of the Basque people in different elements. The abovementioned author was inspired by the prehistoric cromlechs of the Basque Pyrenean area, which in many cases were reused in the Iron Age. From that archaeological context he deduced in his 1963 masterpiece, *Quousque tandem...!* that emptiness or the empty whole represented to a large extent the Basque (Oteiza Embil 1993), setting in motion a long tradition of artists who sought this emptiness in their creations and artistic expressions.

However, it is not the only element used in the Iron Age that has been given the capacity to represent the Basque. This is also the case with the *Lauburu* (Fig. 4), which in Basque means four heads and is an adaptation of the solar symbols in the form of a swastika with rounded arms. In the Basque Country, these solar symbols, from which the *Lauburu* derives, appear on the funerary stelae used by the Iron Age societies (Fig. 4). This symbol was later combined with other Roman elements, such as epigraphies or anthropomorphic figures, that end up being assimilated by the Christian worldview of the Middle Ages. We can place the first appearances of the *lauburu*, in its current form, in the 16th century (De Pablo Contreras 2009), when it was used as ornamentation of different elements of popular culture. This remained the case until the nineteenth century when the archaeologist Schliemann discovered abundant motifs of this type in his excavations around the Aegean Sea and became popular throughout Europe, associating them with the identity of current societies (De Pablo Contreras 2009). Something similar happened in the Basque Country

when nationalism at the beginning of the twentieth century adopted these symbols as Basque, popularising them enormously. But it was not until the Second Spanish Republic (1931-1939) that the term *Lauburu* was separated from the swastika, a symbol that used to be associated with. After this, its use became standardised and popularised, achieving great recognition, so much so that it has become a symbol of personal self-representation and the main element of Basque merchandising (Fig. 4).



Figure 4. 1: Swastika on the pre-Roman stele (Later Iron Age) of Paresi (Busturia, Bizkaia), source: J. Hidalgo-Masa. 2: Current representation of Lauburu, source: Wikipedia.org. 3: The Lauburu turned into merchandising, source: Facebook.com.

Another notorious example of Iron Age elements in our present day can be found in various elements from the official Basque heraldry, such as the case of the coats of arms of the Provincial Council of Gipuzkoa and the municipality of Anoeta (Fig. 5). Before going into the matter, it is worth mentioning that the symbols of a public body represent much more than just a territory; they embody ethical and ideological values (Gregg 1991). Thus, for example, it is no coincidence that the Bolshevik revolutions of the early twentieth century used red as a symbol, since it represents power or revolution, and with it they wanted to convey the power of popular organisation by using it. The same stands for the examples we will analyse below, where each colour and element were carefully chosen and in order to convey specific values, intertwined with elements from the Iron Age.

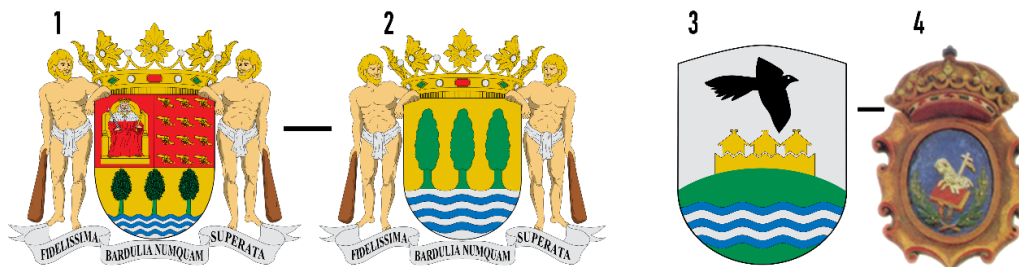


Figure 5. 1: Coat of arms of Gipuzkoa (1513-1799). 2: Coat of arms of Gipuzkoa (1799-). 3: Coat of arms of Anoeta (Gipuzkoa) (2010-). 4: Coat of arms of Anoeta (Gipuzkoa) (1868-2010). Source: Wikipedia.org.

Firstly, we will talk about the coat of arms of the municipality of Anoeta (Gipuzkoa), which was substantially modified in recent decades until it took on its current form, following a public process, promoted by the city council, implemented by the Aranzadi Science Society and ratified by the local residents. The original coat of arms consisted of a lamb holding a book that symbolised Saint John the Baptist (Fig. 5), but the current municipal coat of arms, adopted in 2010, consists of a grey background with a representation of the river Oria, which flows through the aforementioned municipality, and above it we can observe Mount Basagain with a series of yellow huts. Finally, there is a cuckoo above all these elements, as the inhabitants of the town are called after it (Fig. 5). In short, the elements that represent the village today are its river, its mountain, the colloquial demonym and some huts that depict the hillfort of Basagain, dating back to the Iron Age where excavations have been carried out since 1994 under the direction of Peñaler Iribarren (Peñalver Iribarren & Uribarri Agirrebengoa 2022). This site has become a source of pride and self-representation for the people of the village and has become part of the local imaginary as the origin of the municipality. In short, the population has changed Christian symbolism for secular historical elements, a trend parallel to that of Basque society as a whole, where the number of practising Catholics is decreasing day by day, according to data from the Basque Government, *Euskadi.eus*.

Secondly, we will deal with the coat of arms of the Provincial Council of Gipuzkoa, the administration in charge of the region's government of the same name belonging to the Basque Country and whose capital is Donostia-San Sebastián. This region, Gipuzkoa, is one of the most industrialised regions of the Iberian Peninsula with the headquarters of large companies, which is why the elements that represent it acquire major importance in a globalised capitalist world. The coat of arms of Gipuzkoa is made up of three green trees that stand over a representation of a river course on a golden background. Outside the margins of the coat of arms there are four elements (Fig. 5): a crown (above), a ribbon (below) and two people flanking the coat of arms with truncheons. We will focus on the two individuals and the ribbon flanking the shield, the latter has a sentence in which the following phrase can be read in Latin: *Fidelessima bardulia numquam superata*, which translates as: Faithful *Bardulia* never to be surpassed. To understand this sentence, it is necessary to acquire some minimal knowledge about what *Bardulia* is, this term alludes to several quotations from classical authors, Strabo III-3-7, Strabo III-4-12, Pomponius Mela III-1-14/15, Pliny Nat.His. III-26 and Plutarch 43 (Larrañaga Elorza 2007), which relate it to the territory inhabited by the *Barduloi*, who are roughly located between the pre-Roman peoples of the Cantabrians and the Basques on the shores of the Cantabrian Sea and as far west as the Pyrenees. In other words, they would occupy an area similar to that occupied by Gipuzkoa today, which is why some authors see these people as the ultimate origin of the region. It should be mentioned that we do not know the use of *Bardulia*, *Vardulia* or *Vardullia* by these same people, and archaeology has not managed to elucidate much about this ethnonym too, although it continues in use as other similar ethnonyms (Moore 2011). Therefore, we only have the vision of the Roman world to clarify the social reality that the word *Bardulia* may have contained, collected by classical authors who were clearly influenced by the Augustan

colonising propaganda, which simplified and caricatured the local peoples, in the context of a regime change in Rome (Salinas de Frías 1998). This promotes omissions or alterations of the characteristics, such as ethnonymy, of the native people in order to serve the interests of Rome (López Jiménez 2004, Moore, 2011). Thus, the descriptions of these people were made from a certain negativity, emphasising the barbarity of the different peoples such as the *Barduloi*, as shown by Solana Sáinz (2003) in his compilation of various quotations on this ethnonym:

“Such is the life of the inhabitants of the mountains, I am referring to those who border the northern side of Iberia, the Galicians, Astures and Cantabrians up to the Vascones and the Pyrenees, since the way of life of all of them is similar. I will refrain from going into enumerations in order to avoid the deformity of the names, unless someone is pleased to hear about the Plentaurs, Barduites and Allostiges and other worse and more unintelligible names...” (Strabo, III, 3, 7).

Maybe this is the reason why the vision of these people has lasted until a few decades ago, as it can be seen in the regional coat of arms from the end of the 15th century to the current days, which reflects part of the vision of the barbarian that matured in the heart of the Roman world. This representation is based on the dichotomous discourse of the barbarian/civilised (Wolf 2011), which has often been undermined and dissociated in order to support the discourse of the barbarian against the Roman, as it happens with contemporary Celtic identities such as Asturias (Marín Suarez 2004, Marín Suarez et al. 2012) or Cantabria (García Sanchez 2009, 2016).

Crossed presents

The diverse elements of the Iron Age that accompany us in our daily lives in the Basque country have been transformed and readapted. Otherwise, their memory would have been lost. This is the reason that pushes many scholars to study the moments of stratification of this memory as a step to understand the reality that surrounds (political) life in the Basque Country today. One of these present moments, is the transition from the Middle Ages to the Modern Age, the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, for it is here that discourses are reorganised.

A conflict marks the transition from the Late Middle Ages to the Modern Basque Age called the War of the Bands (fourteenth/fifteenth century) (Díaz de Durana 1998, Fernández de Larrea Rojas 2009), where two sides, the *Gamboínos* and the *Oñaicinos*, who brought together different families together, fought for a more significant influence in the territory. These conflicts were a feudal reaction to the constant decline of the local rural elites to the detriment of the cities or towns, with which the monarchy was strengthening its position (Díaz de Durana 1998). To all this must be added the last throes of the destabilisation caused by the Black Death and the efforts to capitalise and monopolise the succulent profits from Basque production in the 14th and 15th centuries (Aragón Ruano 2003), such as the iron foundries (Vitores Casado 2017) or whaling in Newfoundland (Canada) (Escribano Ruiz et al. 2015). It is in this context that the Basque elites saw in the Hispanic Monarchy the perfect opportunity to expand their lucrative businesses, as well as to substantially reinforce their positions, closing the quarrels of the past. Thus, a policy of promotion of the Basque elites in the Hispanic Monarchy begun (Imízcoz Beunza 2008) began, based on the promotion of relatives or acquaintances through the

influence of the Basque clusters established around the court and the privileges obtained by a recent successful discursive device. This context was taking advantage of the conditioning factors of the time, the discourse of the Counter-Reformation or purity of blood, among others, arguing that the Basques were old Christians who did not mix with foreign elements. They also had their own ancient laws, called *fueros*, and an ancient language, Euskera or Basque. All this made them worthy of certain privileges such as universal nobility, tax advantages or exemption from certain duties and obligations to the crown. This discourse crystallised throughout the Modern Age in an ideology known as Tubalism, i.e., the belief that the Basques were descendants of the biblical character Tubal (Imízcoz Beunza 2008), who according to the first-century chronicler Titus Flavius Josephus repopulated the Iberian Peninsula after the biblical flood, and it was even said that the language spoken in the biblical landscapes was Basque.



Figure 6. Left: poster describing a music band as Bardulia rock OI. Right: Poster of the Holidays in....Bardulia! 2012. Source: Facebook.com.

The purity of Basqueness was argued with the continued survival in the same territory of the people and their traditions, which went back to the *Barduloi* of the Iron Age, being the original inhabitants of Gipuzkoa, and that is why since 1513 they have appeared on the regional coat of arms reinforcing this idea. In other words, the idea of a kind of Basque Pompeii syndrome developed (Olivier 2020), in which the Iron Age was directly linked to the Modern Age. This belief lasted until the nineteenth century when, under the influence of nationalism and romanticism, an epic national narrative began to be constructed, associating durability with the idea of the people's resistance. This idea of resistance, together with the lack of Roman sites until almost the second half of the twentieth century (Urteaga Artigas 2012), gave birth to a belief in the worldview or imaginary of the Basque people that there

was little Roman influence in our environment, a myth that archaeology has been dismantling in recent decades, with the discovery of sites such as Aloria (Cepeda Ocampo 1999), Forua (Martínez Salcedo 2019) or Oiasso (Urteaga Artigas 2012), among others. This idea of Basque resistance lasted until the twentieth century when it became intertwined with the Basque pro-independence left, and even today it resonates strongly in many Basque cultural discourses and activities, as Asturias (Marín Suárez et al. 2012, Marín Suárez 2005, Alonso González & González Álvarez 2013), Galicia (Díaz Santana 2002) or other European regions such as Ireland (Cooney & Grogan 1991). A clear example of this is that part of the combative music scene in the Basque Country has been celebrating until a few years ago the festival “Holidays in... Bardulia!” (Fig. 6), where this idea of resistance and permanence in the territory of Basque culture is vindicated, so much so that the promotional poster makes use of the coat of arms of the region with the representation of the two figures of the *Barduloi*.

In short, a discourse conceived as the promotion of a Modern Age elite with insatiable ambitions was assimilated by society, adapting it as a national epic. For this purpose, an altered Iron Age reality of classical authors was used as the driving force of its historical legitimacy, similar to the process that happened in Galicia (González Ruibal 2007) or France (Dietler 1994), among others. This discourse has been readapted over time, allowing its memory to live on to the present day. Thus, a stratification of different elements is generated, such as the *Lauburu*, the landscapes of the Basque Country or some elements of official Basque heraldry, which articulate it through very disparate presents. This makes the current Basque identity and self-representation discourse a clear example of what we have been calling *crossed presents*, as it crosses the Palaeolithic, Iron Age, the Roman world and the Modern Age into contact with each other from contemporary times. In these crossings, each present retains its specific cultural, social, and economic characteristics, thus re-signifying other presents, forming its specific one, based on very diverse elements, as in the Basque case.

However, these crossings aren't even homogeneous, as collective memory is lax and flexible, adapting to the changes of time. As a result, gaps and asymmetries are created in the relevance of the memory of specific moments, directly proportional to the depth of the processes of each present. In the specific case of the Basque Country, the analysis of the *crossed presents* in the current identity discourse allows us to elucidate that there are three different moments, Palaeolithic, the Iron Age and the Modern Age, which are of singular importance. On the one hand, we have the Modern Age because this is when the reorganisation of different classical symbols or narratives took place, thus forming a narrative that will be used by the elite of the time. On the other hand, we have the Iron Age because this is the final moment in which the bases of this discourse are generated, such as the *Barduloi* and *Vascones* people or the Iron Age stelae with their different motifs.

Conclusions

It is possible to carry out an archaeology configured by diverse moments that form each specific reality. This archaeology treats time in a flexible and not hermetic way as done in modern historiography. Archaeology is the science that studies the memory of objects that have reached our days (Olivier 2020) and this is formed with the stratification of the present over time. This line of work is not new; authors such as Witmore (2007), González-Ruibal (2007), Olsen (2007) and Olivier (2004, 2020) have been working on it for several decades, under the umbrella of the so-called Symmetrical Archaeology, but its potential has yet to be developed. That is why in archaeological study the idea of *crossed presents* is strictly necessary in order, among other things, to unravel the present in which we live.

The Basque Country is a paradigmatic case of *crossed presents*, since many current ideological elements, symbols of social self-representation, and landscapes or beliefs, are a stratification of moments, as we have observed throughout the text. For all these reasons, it is necessary to decolonise the Basque past to unravel the knot of our times, which in the case in question is still latent after recently emerging from an armed conflict that has lasted fifty years.

Finally, this type of analysis of *crossed presents* serves to give a voice to reality, the Basque Atlantic Iron Age, which in many cases is mute due to its material sparseness and the lack of research efforts, but which, even so, has maintained part of its memory, surviving the passage of time. Additionally, these analyses also involve connecting today's society with the Iron Age, since by analysing the different elements that make up the current Basque identity discourse, which society has kept within itself, it can understand them and link itself to them, as has been seen previously in the case of the municipality of Anoeta or a Basque music band, where a group of people have made both a fortified settlement and the ancient *Bardulia* part of their own present.

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Dido's foundation legend, archetypes of foundation myths in Eurasia and Neomythology in the nineteenth century Balkans.

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Abstract

Dido's foundation legend of Carthage survives as a basic archetype for numerous foundation legends of Eurasia throughout the Middle Ages. The stratagem of the ox-hide is repeatedly referred as main theme of the foundation of towns, cities, and kingdoms, from the British Islands to the Balkans and eastern Eurasia. By the time of the genesis of the new nation – states in the Balkans the Didonian archetype has been re-proposed in the case of the foundation of the town of Naoussa, in Northern Greece, now with the Ottoman conqueror of the Balkans playing the role of Dido. His name was Gazi Evrenoz Beg, a Greek renegade who appears in a Greek manuscript found in Naoussa with attributes and characteristics taken by the Graeco-Roman vernacular and written tradition. In this article is studied and analyzed the survival of the ancient myth in the modern times focusing on the reproduction of it in the nineteenth century Balkans.

Keywords

Dido, Evrenoz, Foundation Myths, Greek and Roman Archetypes, Romanitas, Imagined Communities, Naoussa, Neo - mythology, Ox – hide, Pater Familias.

Introductory note

In the present article an ancient Mediterranean myth of long life is considered through its expansion in the British Islands, Scandinavia, and Eurasia during many centuries after the final decline of the Roman Empire. According to the myth, which explains the foundation of settlements and even kingdoms in an extraordinarily vast geographic area, the protagonists conquer land with no war. The expansion of this motif is not only geographical but diachronic and multi-versioned since it is found to be expressed as a repetitive model in recent historical instances, as that of the Balkan Naoussa. The ways the myth has been revived follow on the one hand the

Roman vernacular tradition of Dido in former Roman lands and on the other the instrumentalization of a classical tradition in modern settings and during the revival of the interest for the classical world as a political projection over the formation of nation-states. Based on the ancient Carthaginian foundation myth of Dido the article enumerates versions of it in different medieval Eurasian areas and analyzes their mechanism of diffusion as well as their impact over the origin of the neo-myths that shaped the creation of the nation-states at the dawn of the modern era.

The case of Naoussa is reported here as typical of this artificial revival of the ancient foundation myth in the Balkans of the mid nineteenth century, at the period of the struggle for constitutional freedom, when the efforts of the Sultans for political renovations and the nationalist movements manifested in the European part of the Ottoman Empire. It will be shown how the original legends related to the foundation of the town were kept back and how a new foundation myth has been promoted by the Christian community according to its need for political and economic reconciliation with the Ottoman authorities after the failed revolt of 1822 and its second foundation in the late 1830's.

The promoted figure of the founder of Naoussa, Gazi Evrenoz, is repropose as a Roman Pater Familias and at the same time as a male version of Dido of Carthage. For this methodically invented pseudo-history of Naoussa particularly role play the political party of the *Çorbacı*, represented by the most powerful Christian families of the town, of clear philo-Ottoman attitude. A dispersed, today, manuscript with the pseudohistory of the foundation of Naoussa becomes later the only published source of its origins as a memory trace of official confirmation and political acceptance of the Ottoman character of its history during the Ottoman period.

Particular focus is given to diverse versions of the same tradition, both vernacular and written. A further analysis provides more information about the concepts of the imagined communities, neo-mythology and the classical archetypes, as major elements of influence over the Balkan nation-states in their creation.

Dido's legend of the foundation of Carthage

Dido was from Phoenicia. According to the pre-Virgilian version of the myth her original name was Elissar, or Elissa (Justinus, *Epitome Historiarum Philippicarum Pompei Trogi*, XVIII, 4–8). She lived in Tyros, as the wife of king Sichaios¹ to whom the throne was granted by her father Massa. Pygmalion, younger brother of Dido, was against their father's will and after killing Sichaios he took possession of the throne. The adventures of Dido started after the *coup d'état* organized by Pygmalion. Forced to abandon Phoenicia, in order to save her life from certain death, she escaped to Cyprus first and to Numidia later, in what is today Libya. In Numidia, Elissar becomes the notorious Dido, hosted by the local king Jarvas and advancing her royal ancestry as a pretext for being treated as a guest with special privileges. Dido asked Jarvas to let her have a territory where to settle the people who followed her from Phoenicia. After getting a negative response to her demand Dido put on action a second plan according to which she would offer to Jarvas a good part of

¹ Or Acerbas, or Zacherbas/Sicharbas.

her richness, asking to have a piece of land big as an ox-hide. If the first plan didn't work, the second brought Dido the expected results. Jarvas accepted the proposal and Dido made out of the animal skin a thin string, able to contain enough land for building a powerful town, Byrsa,² which was later destined to be glorious Carthage, and establishing the worship of Goddess Urania (Ἡρώδιανός, 5, 4). Jarvas realizing that the exotic and tricky woman was to become a dangerous rival worked back his own plan, asking her to be his consort in order to fuse the two royal towns in one, and leading Dido to the suicide.

Virgil (Virgil, Aeneid, Book I, 1–2), as a national poet and Livy, as a national historiographer of Rome, re-telling an older account of Dido's story narrated by Timaeus (Timaeus, FHG, 1. 197), were responsible for making famous to the world a local myth. With the expansion of the Roman legions to all directions of Europe, Dido and her notorious stratagem became part of a tradition common among the most disparate nations of the continent and of the British Islands.

Foundation myths of Eurasia

In England, the Phoenician myth was transplanted into local English traditions such as those of Hengist in Lincolnshire (Gamden 1695), and of Thong in Kent. According to Geoffrey Monmouth's *Historiae Regum Britanniae* the Saxon leader Hengist after supporting King Vertigern's territories manages to get lands as recognition for his loyalty to the King. Having methodically discovered a way to get more power he asks Vertigern a land big as a hide. Hengist and Horsa (Tatlock 1950, Morris 1885), the two Saxon leaders whose armies were used as mercenaries against other invaders of Britain turn into conquerors themselves and they establish their new communities permanently on British soil. More precisely Monmouth reports the imaginative dialogue between the two, with Hengist starting as this: "*Sir, your enemies give you disturbance from all quarters, and few of your subjects love you. They all threaten you, and say they are going to bring over Aurelius Ambrosius from Armorica, to depose you, and make him king. If you please, let us send to our country to invite over some more soldiers, that with our forces increased we may be better able to oppose them*".

Until that moment the brothers Hengist and Horsa were working in the service of Vertigern as mercenaries. As the earliest sagas have it this would be the way Saxons started to expand their military power over the British islands. In this semi-historical report of Monmouth, the crucial moment of the further expansion of the Saxons in England depends on the ability Hengist shows to Vertigern the way for salvation against the foreign invasions, which is to invite more Saxons from the continent. But this first request of Hengist is followed by a second one which is decisive for his first real establishment in the new country: "*But there is one thing which I would desire of your clemency if I did not fear a refusal. The possessions which you have given me in land and houses are very large, but you have not yet done me that honor which becomes my station and birth, because, among other things, I should have had some hometown or city guarded me, that I might be*

² Βύρσα in Greek means: piece of animal skin, βύρσος, βυρσοδέψης, βυρσοδεψείον, κατεβύρσωμαι, βυρσοδέψης ἡ σκυτοτόμος, Πολυδεύκης, 7, 83 – 84.

entitled to greater esteem among the nobility of your kingdom. I ought to have been made a count or prince since my ancestors enjoyed both those dignities”.

Vertigern responded: *“it is not in my power to do you so much honor, because you are strangers and pagans, neither am I yet so far acquainted with your manners and customs, as to set you on a level with my natural born subjects. And indeed, if I did esteem you as my subjects, I should not be forward to do so because the nobility of my kingdom would strongly dissuade me from it”.*

Hengist insisting in his demand he immediately responded: *“Give your servant only so much as I can encompass with a leathern thong, for me to build a fortress upon, as a place of retreat if occasion should require. For I will always be faithful to you, as I have been hitherto, and pursue no other design in the request which I have made”.*

The king orders, then, Hengist to send for more mercenaries to Germany and: *“Hengist immediately executed his orders, and taking a bull’s hide made one thong out of the whole, with which he encompassed a rocky place that had been carefully made to build a castle, which, when finished took its name from the thong were with it had been measured; for it was afterwards called in the British tongue Kaerborrei, in Saxon Thancastre, that is Thong Castle”* (The British History of Geoffrey Monmouth, Book 6, Ch. XI).

The story of Hengist and Horsa is similar to the story of Ivar the Boneless (McTurk 1991), son of Ragnar Lothbrog who exchanges his threatening presence on British soil with an ox-hide territorial demand from king of Northumbria, Aella.

The hide, an old Anglo-Saxon unit of measurement, seems that was fruit of Dido’s myth, and it has been invented out of this legendary stratagem. J. U. Powell observes: *“as well might we connect ham which is often found in place – names, with “ham” meaning the hinder part of a pig, because waiters in Vauxhall Gardens here according to the wits of the time, supposed to be able to carve a ham into slices thin enough to cover an acre”* (Powell 1933: 312). According to a local legend reported to Liebrecht Hyde Park in London took its name from the ox-hide myth (Liebrecht 1851: 514).

As an old legend of Bulverhythe, near Hastings, the advancing William the Conqueror from Pevensey Bay to Bulverhythe cut a bull’s hide into strings tiding them in one piece in order to fight as far as the strings would reach (Ekwall 1960). According to the medieval Dunstable legends the Iron Age fortress of Maiden Bower (Hasted 1798: 132–134, Behrend 1996) in Bedfordshire, was founded by a queen who cut a bull’s hide into thongs, joined them and shaped a circle with it (Smith 1904: 56–57). The queen impressed the king telling him that she was able to encamp the entire army of the kingdom within an ox-hide, and she successfully did it. The king, delighted, ordered a sophisticated defensive system to be erected along the line of the joint thongs (Bailey 1981).

The existence of the stone circle, situated on the hills above Llanbryn-mair (History of the Parish of Llanbryn-mair, Mont. Coll. 1888, XXII, 308), known as Lled Croen yr Ycht and which in Gaelic means width of the ox-hide, was explained by the local tradition as the grave of a gigantic oxen that died of grief at being parted by his mate. Once the oxen died, he was skinned by the local people and the thongs produced surrounded the circle of stones (Williams 1911).

In Britain the material remains of the legendary circles of thongs survived as stone circles that didn’t have any practical character of protection, but they were seen as

products of religious protective rituals performed by the time of the foundation. Furthermore, the memories of thong-based foundations could have the character of property limits and sacred enclosures which were accepted as foundation acts not only of states, feuds, and towns but of private or municipal territories, such as those of church yards, farms and lands belonging to local owners (De la Pryme 1870: 61–62).

In Scandinavia an entire circle of Sagas is connected to the ox-hide, not simply as a foundation act but as a supernatural medium of the concept of conquest and victory over a rival such as the Scandinavian *Holmgang*, a duel between two berserkers on the limited space of an ox-hide. The *Holmgang*, or *Bokmal* practice (Guerber 1895: 73–75)³ reflects the concept of fighting on matters of ownership, property, or the fair conquest of a territory (Behrend 1996).⁴ Clear is its direct relation to the further establishment of the winner over the claimed land and his resulting rights of ownership (Radford 1989).

We have a version of the stratagem in the Scandinavian foundation myth of Gefjon who procured land from Gylfi to form her kingdom of Seeland. Gefjon was a tutor of the women who died virgin. Odin (Guerber 1895: 73–75.)⁵ sent Gefjon to the king of Sweden Gylfi in order to ask for some land for herself. The king, amused, promised her as much land as she could plough around in one day and night. Gefjon turned her sons into an ox harnessing them to plough and started to cut a huge border line. At the end of her project, she cut the piece of land contained into this large area and she dropped it into the sea. The result was to create the kingdom of Seeland.

However, Scandinavia's Sagas are related to the old English legends regarding the ox-hide and its use as a way to obtain land. This is the case of Ragnar Lothbrok's son (Lewis 1831: 613) Ivar the Boneless who after fighting with no good results against the King of Northumbria Aella he proposes to him to quit threatening his kingdom with just demanding a piece of land as big as an ox-hide (Schlauch 1949: 246–247). The land is given, and the permanent establishment of the Norsemen in Britain is a reality (Waggoner 2009).

In France Raymond of Poitiers after losing his way while hunting he was found by Melusina the Nymph and her two companions. Melusina fell in love with Raymond, and she suggested him to ask from King Bertram a plot of land, at the point of their first meeting. King Bertram gives Raymond a minuscule piece of land, enough to contain a deer – hide, without ever imagining that soon there will be a strong tower built on the spot, threatening his own dominion over the entire kingdom. In the European continent the foundation myth of Poitier is a striking example of a legend

³ *Holmgang*, *Bokmal*, and *Nynorsk* in ancient Norwegian mean “to walk on a tiny islet, or over a small ox-hide”. The duel was considered to be a prove of courage and bravery of both offender – offended, and it had to be fought according to an early etiquette of chivalry.

⁴ This reminds Roman hero Horatius Coclès who was granted as much land as he could plough round in a day. Ox-hide tricks, sacred ploughing and duels over bull skins are connected always with claimed pieces of land with resulting rights of ownership.

⁵ According to the old Norse Mythology Odin's sons, Weldegg, Beldegg, Sigi, Skiold, Saeming and Yngui were the ancestors of the royal houses of East Saxony, West Saxony, Franconia, Denmark Norway and Sweden. The Saxons Hengist and Horsa, protagonists of one of the ox-hide foundation myths of Britain, are considered to be descendants of Odin's sons too.

based on similar semiotic parameters. Melusina and Raimond are the protagonists, presented as the equivalents of Dido and Aeneas in Medieval France.

Following the traces of Dido's tradition in Eastern Europe we find them in the foundation of Hermannstadt⁶ in the area of the Roman town of Cedonia, along the border with Dacia. In the case of Hermannstadt protagonist is a man, Hermann (Mullet 1972), a German colonizer of the Extra Germania territories (Florea 2010). Hermann was a hard-working peasant of humble origins who asked from the lord of the place to have some land of his own big as an ox-hide. We can guess the rest of the story, which is following the repetitive motif of Dido's, though the legendary event is taking place at the territory of an anciently established Roman town of the frontier which was one of the numerous Roman Limes of Transylvania.

On the Hellespont, the strip of sea dividing Europe from Asia, a circular fortress has been built over the myth of Mehmed Fatih who planned to establish an advanced military post, in front of Constantinople, in order to extend his plans for conquering Byzantium. Evliya Çelebi in his first book reports an old legend according to which a Greek priest who secretly adopted the Islamic faith suggested to Mehmed Fatih to build a fortress cutting off the Byzantine supplies. The priest prophesized to Mehmet that he would become the Conqueror of Constantinople. Mehmed by the time of his siege of Byzantium, many years after the priest's prophecy, asked Constantin the Palaeologue, last Emperor of the dying Byzantine Empire, his permission for building a hunting lodge on the European coast of Bosphorus. The trick is the same as Dido's. The Greek emperor, after a long reflection, gave his permission to Mehmed, but under the strict term that the land shouldn't exceed the size of an ox-hide. It is, as the legend has it, the way that Mehmed, future emperor of Istanbul, would build Rumeli Hisari Castle, terrain of decisive activities during the long siege of Constantinople (Evliya Çelebi Seyahatname Kitab I, chapters 20, 52, 252).

Further to deeper Asia, in Bukhara in 1858, Piotr Ivanovich Lerkh, officer of the Russian embassy in China, made the outstanding discovery of the miniature map of Bukhara, when he was sent to Bukhara to collect rare manuscripts and ancient coins on behalf of the Asiatic Archaeological Society. The rare map was deposited in the archives of Lerkh until 1964, when Soviet archaeologist R. L. Gafurova re-found it (Gafurova 1992: 37, 70) and the historian A. R. Muhamedjanov studied it (Muhamedjanov 1965: 36). The rarity of the miniature map of Bukhara consists in its shape, which has the form of an ox-hide, and it is three-partied, with a white panorama of the city, a reddish outlook of its center, and a greenish part showing the suburbs. The fact that the shape of the map imitates an ox-hide is a good evidence of Bukhara's double tradition of foundation, which is as it follows:

Halok (Burns 1834: 329–330), eccentric King who loved asking travellers to solve difficult riddles, put to death those who wouldn't demonstrate enough ability. One day a gifted young boy of seven, Imam Kazy Khan, takes the decision to face the difficult riddles of the King. Halok didn't agree to receive the courageous boy, due to the young of his age, still, Imam Kazy Khan insisted saying to the King that if *“you need to see somebody taller than me, then I have got my camel, and if you need to meet an*

⁶ Today's Romanian Sibiu.

older, then I have my bearded goat by my side'. These challenging words of the boy opened him the doors of the royal palace, and together the possibility of resolving the riddles. Halok should then accept to respond positively to Imam Kazy Khan's request "*for a piece of land as big as an ox-hide*".

According to the second foundation myth of Bukhara it is a Mongolian Khan and not Halok who makes the questions to the travellers. The myth is that strong that survives throughout time, until the early nineteenth century, when the ox-hide map was fabricated, though the earliest foundation of Boukhara according to the oldest local traditions was due to Sikunder Zoolkurnuen (Burns 1834: 329–330), the famous to all Alexander the Macedon. In reality, it is not Bukkhara that has been established according to the Didonian stratagem, but the old tower known as the Ark of Bukhara.

Gazi Evrenoz the Conqueror and the early Ottoman conquest in the Balkans

Gazi Evrenoz Beg, with the assistance of his children's instructor Sheh Liani,⁷ is considered the founder of Naoussa, a town about 90 kilometers to the SW of Thessaloniki, which is to become in the nineteenth century the first industrial center in the Ottoman Balkans. According to the prevailing myth Evrenoz discovers an ideal area to found a town, developing the same stratagem of Dido's.

Founder of a proper dynasty with outstanding longevity in the Ottoman history, Evrenoz's origins are obscure since different traditions preserve a variety of approaches to the prehistory of his family tree, though even his name is reported in more than one version. When historical events were still mixed with the veil of obscure legends, a distinct personality makes his appearance having essential military achievements throughout the Balkan Peninsula (Οικονομιδης et alii 2011–2013). Unknown are the exact dates of birth and death, counting a long lifespan which cover or even surpass a century.

It is still unclear whether Evrenoz was originally a Muslim (Köprülü 2001: 208),⁸ if he was a Christian renegade like many others (Ζαχαριάδου 1999, Lowry 2012), and if he was a native of Thrace, Byzantium, or Bithynia (Ζαχαριάδου 1999).⁹ Due to the similarity of his family name with that of one illustrious Byzantine family, the Vranas (Liakopoulos 2002),¹⁰ there has been supposed a connection with the Christian officers who were responsible for the military organization and protection of Evros River, a place-name similar to the General's (Moravcsik Byzantinoturcica). In the Byzantine bibliography Evrenoz is referred as Evrenez, Vrenez, Vrenesis, Vrenes, Vranas, Avranesis, Vraneus.¹¹ For the Greeks Evrenoz' father was Ornos, a well – known Byzantine governor of Prusa who chose to become a renegade changing his name in Isa and turning into Bey of Prangi, on Evros River, at Didimotycho.

⁷ Also known as Sheah Leaei' and Abdullāh Illāhi'.

⁸ Köprülü considers with certainty Evrenoz a Turk and of noble Turkish extraction though without advancing any stable proves for it.

⁹ According to Zahariadou his name is not Turkish.

¹⁰ Liakopoulos mentions as possible family name the Vryonis.

¹¹ Branezis according to Manuel II the Palaeologue, Avranesis according to Phrantzis, Evrenez according to Doukas.

Evrenoz founded one of the longest noble dynasties in the Ottoman Empire, enlisted among the five oldest families, such as the Mihaloğlu, the Omeroğlu, the Malkoçoğlu, and the Turahanoğlu (Mutavchieva 1988), generating seven sons who were responsible for continuing his war achievements in the Balkans. Some genealogical discrepancies, though, produced confusion between the political and military deeds of Evrenoz and one, or two, of his immediate descendants, reason for erroneously believing that Evrenoz leaved for 120 years, or even more.

Despite all the above uncertain details about Evrenoz' origins, his military successes have been sufficiently reported, such as the fulminous conquest of the Balkans, Central Greece and the Moreas, starting from Thrace (Ζαχαριάδου 1999) and Macedonia (Ζαχαριάδου 1999) and providing to the Ottoman Empire all its European provinces, expanding its direct control from Evros River to the Adriatic Sea, and from the Balkans to the Aegean.

Evrenoz, started his career as a “Beg” in the district of Carasi and he was promoted to a “Gazi” after the Ottoman campaigns in the Balkans (Melikoff 1991: 720). In 1362 he conquered Edirne¹² when he was appointed Uç Bey of Thessaly. In 1389 he fought in Kossovo, in 1392 – 93 he conquered Thebes and Levadeia (Σαββίδης 1993: 25) and in 1396 he fought at the battle of Nikopolis of Epirus. Corinth was conquered in 1397 (Σαββίδης 2004: 42). In 1402 Evrenoz participated in the battle of Ankara, when Beyesid I was captured by the Mongols of Timurlan. It is in that instance that Evrenoz manages to bring to safety the entire Order of the Yeniçeri, moving the army from the central Anatolian plateau to the western coastline of Asia Minor, with no losses.

Evrenoz' preference for Macedonia was expressed through his choice of Yennice I Vardar (Demetriades 1976)¹³ as the town destined to become the place of his last home, where he ordered his proper tomb to be build, turning the town that he founded into a pilgrim's destination until the modern times, and his Gazi Baba Turbe' into a holly place of the Muslims throughout the centuries.

Naoussa

Naoussa (Γαβριηλίδης 1999)¹⁴ is located in the district of Emathia, northern Greece (Fig. 1), near the ancient Macedonian territory of Mieza, about 90 kilometers to the west of Thessaloniki, and at the foot of Mt Vermion (Φιλίππιδης 1881). In the antiquity the fertile plain facing Naoussa was considered to be the mythological Mida's Gardens. The most famous ancient traces in the vicinity are the monumental graves of Macedonian type, and the town of Mieza with its theatre and other remains of ancient buildings. At the Nymphaeon, between ancient Mieza and modern Naoussa is located Aristotle's School, where the young royal – Prince Alexander took his classes in the company of his few fellows *etairoi*. The ancient town of Kition was in the area too, probably somewhere between the plain and the foot of Vermion but not really identified yet. The closer to the Ottoman period settlement of Naoussa, called Palioniaousta, should be located at the SE steep slopes of Vermion,

¹² Former Hadrianopolis.

¹³ Modern Yiannitsa'.

¹⁴ In the past known as Niagousta, Negush, Agostos, Avugost or even Nea Avgusta.

above the Babos Katsikia rocks (Σπάροτσης 2016). Naoussa between 1860 and 1930 was known as the Manchester of the Balkans due to the numerous woollen mills and to its industrial textile production and exports.

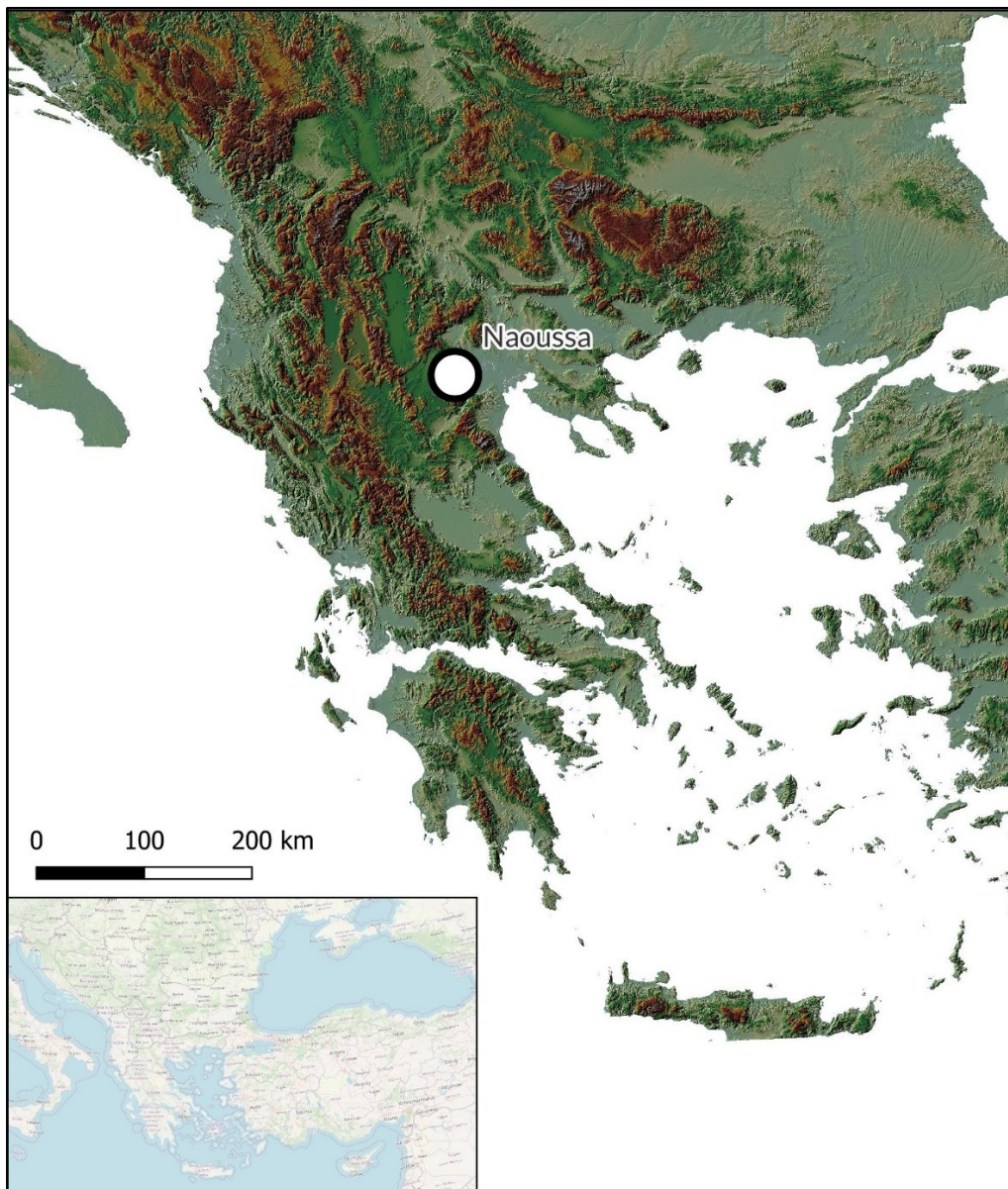


Figure 1. Naoussa.

Since Naoussa was in the past personal property of the Imperial Mothers and after the mid – nineteenth century the first industrial center of the Ottoman Empire in the Balkans, a powerful middle and upper class was developed (Νικολαΐδης 1859), which established a particularly prolific commercial network, including the Habsburg's Empire, Egypt, and great number of countries of Eastern Europe (Μπάιτσης 1997). At the turn of the twentieth century proud Naoussa's merchants and industrialists were travelling as far as to Great Britain, Belgium and the United States in order to update their technological know – how, to let their successors be educated in Europe and America and to arrange deals with new partners from abroad (Ρούπα & Χειμολογλου 2004: 292–301). Wool was provided to Naoussa's

industries by the Valachian communities of Emathia and Pieria (Ρούπα & Χελίμογλου 2004: 486–499), and cotton was imported from the filial to Naoussa's companies established in Egypt (Γιούτας 1999).

Though Naoussa during the Ottoman occupation of the Balkans was a town with special privileges granted by the Sultans, and having only a Muslim governor, a judge and their families living permanently in it, the town is believed that it was first founded by the Ottoman Turks (Φιλίππιδης 1881, Βασδραβέλλης 1952). According to the oldest oral memories, this took place around the late fourteenth century by a supposed Byzantine renegade, or descendant of renegades, who managed to hike successfully the military hierarchy of the Ottoman army, Gazi Evrenoz Beg, the man who was responsible for the fast conquest of Thrace, Macedonia, Central Greece and the Peloponnesus referred as the founder of the Evrenozoglu Dynasty which gave military and political leaders to the Empire, until the early twentieth century (Γαβριηλίδης 1999).

In the second half of the nineteenth century the history of the foundation of Naoussa appeared for the first time in written form, by D. Platarides, who however never printed it. In that *Istoria tis Poleos Naoussis*, “*History of the Town of Naoussa*”, later re-written and published by the local teacher Stougiannakis (fig. 2), Platarides made use of local oral traditions some of which were to be found in Baujour's account of Evrenoz' biography, given to him by Abdulrahman Bey direct descendant of Evrenoz, and in the local vernacular tradition. The promotion of a text with obscure provenance, at a time of major national movements emerging in the Balkans which was more similar to a tale than to a proper historical account, and which was written in Greek and not in Turkish, sounds as a paradox today, but not as such then, still at an epoch of a productive multicultural engagement in the area, which was promoted and kept alive by the cosmopolitan character of the Ottoman Imperial Court.

The main legend of the foundation of Naoussa according to the unpublished text of Platarides

According to the unpublished text of Platarides, the foundation of Naoussa goes as it follows: Gazi Evrenoz, a wise and skillful General of Murad the First, during his successful military campaigns in Thrace and Macedonia, remained delighted by the natural beauty of an area called: Caratash, an extended terrace similar to a garden, next to the spectacular falls of the river Arapitsa, some 150 meters above a particularly fertile plain (Στουγιαννάκης 1924). He learned that the local population was hiding from him in the Vermion Mountain, not very far from the springs of the river, where they had their primitive settlement, known as: Paloniaousta, or Old Niaousta. Evrenoz had the idea of inviting them to abandon their shelter and to show up, bringing as gifts wooden shoes, painted with bright colors. The barefoot mountaineers, who were reduced in the condition of savages, without ever having seen similar objects and without being able to realize their proper use, approached shyly Evrenoz and his officers, surprised by the unexpected offer. Without being sure how to wear the colored shoes, since they didn't have any previous knowledge of this extravagant for them accessories, the savages of Paloniaousta managed to

put them on their feet, and then trying to walk with difficulty. It was too late to understand that this was the right moment for Evrenoz to capture them.

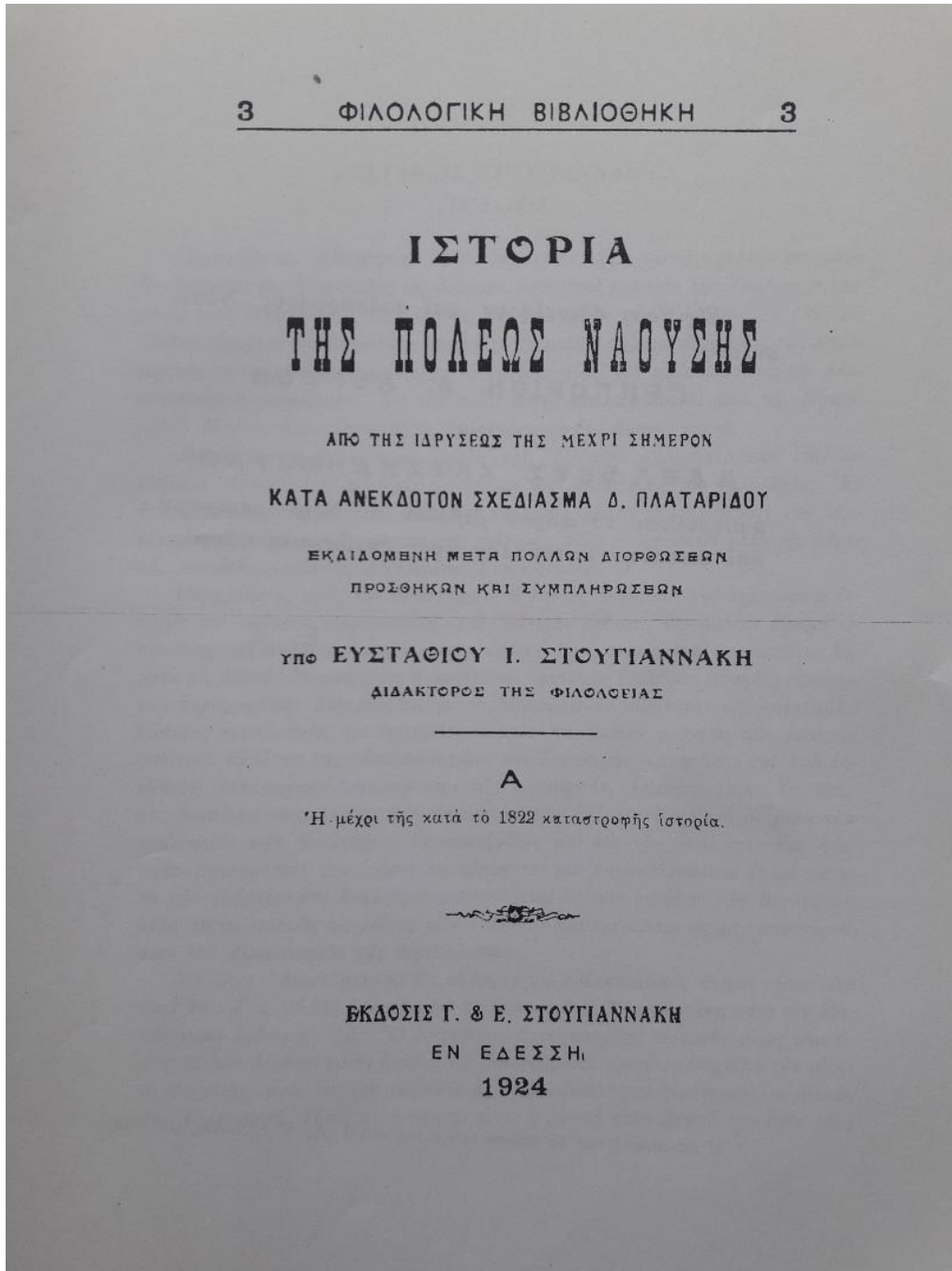


Figure 2. Title page of “History of the town of Naoussa”, by E. Stougiannakis.

Once he put everything in order and organized his conquered territories, Evrenoz visited the Sultan in Edirne giving him full report of his achievements in Thrace and Macedonia. The Great Turk, happy with the good news, offered Evrenoz hospitality in the royal palace and he promised to grant him anything he would like to have, as a gift for his services to the Throne. To this generous proposal Evrenoz responded with the demand of having a town of his own, whose entire territory wouldn't be

bigger than an ox-hide. The Sultan accepted, as expected to do, and the deal was established between the two men.

After turning to Caratash and ordering the savages to gather in front of him, Evrenoz talked to them, explaining that he was coming as a friend and his desire was to make of them civilized people and to give them a new home, in the town that he was intending to found. The savages followed him to the place where he weaved out of the ox-hide a very thin strip indicating the external border of the chosen territory for new Niaousta. He enclosed the area within a comfortable space bordered by the strip which he fixed on four newly planted plain trees (fig. 3), along the periphery of the circle (Λαγόπουλος 2002: 234). Naoussa, Niausta, Niagusta, Negus, Agostos, Avdustos became a reality.

As the story has it, Evrenoz brings civilization to “local savage populations”, through the foundation of a new town and their transformation into citizens. Furthermore, he makes use of a trick known already in antiquity, since the legendary times of beautiful Dido/Elissa, and later as a popular poetic work written by Virgil, “Dido and Aeneas”, in order to convince his master the Sultan to allow him the establishment of his own town. Evrenoz for a second time uses a trick, that of the wooden and colored shoes, for capturing the natives, without harming them. Then, he makes a speech to the population giving proof of his personal political charisma. Lastly, he locates the borders of his town within a huge circle fabricated out of an ox-hide strip. The legendary story of the foundation of Naoussa is developed with the use of traditional means, tested in ancient times, emblematic symbols of the talented founder. Expert of the military art, gifted orator, skilful manipulator of the masses, Evrenoz’s actions incarnate here the archetype of the genius leader who merits to be crowned by final success in all his achievements. The story of the foundation describes, in mythological terms, the entire career of a historical personality, reflecting, as a sort of simplified epitome, all the sides of a charismatic conqueror.



Figure 3. “Stravoplatanos” - Naoussa. One of the remaining plain trees supposedly planted by Gazi Evrenoz during the foundation of Naoussa.

Gerasimos Kapsalis, Doctor of Philology, Counsellor of Public Education who taught classical philology at the Gymnasium of Veroia in the years 1912–1913 and 1915–1916, wrote and published a long article on the Bulletin of the Greek Folklore Society¹⁵ with the title: Folklore of Naoussa. The article is about the way Naoussa was founded and he reported various elements of local folklore related to old popular songs and costumes and other rare information. In his own reported foundation of Naoussa Kapsalis mentions in three paragraphs the foundation of the

¹⁵ Δελτίον της Ελληνικής Λαογραφικής Εταιρείας.

town by Gazi' Evrenoz alone, in the fashion described by Platarides/Stougiannakis, though Kapsalis' report was published in 1917 (*Καψάλης* 1917), 7 years before Stougiannakis' publication of his *Istoria tis Poleos Naoussis*. It is probable that Stougiannakis took in consideration Kapsalis' study and perhaps made use of his article. Kapsalis doesn't refer his sources. We ignore if Kapsalis knew about the existence of Platarides manuscript, nor if he ever saw it and used it. Remarkable is the persistence of the basic elements composing the story, such as the methods used by Evrenoz to earn the trust of the local inhabitants, or such as the ox-hide trick and the foundation of the town tracing its design over a cruciform pattern with the help of four plain trees who planted on the four points of the horizon. However, Kapsalis gives us valid information about two more elements of the local tradition; one related to the uniform used by the men of Naoussa during the annual celebration of the Carnival, and the second related to a name with which the male population of Naoussa used to call themselves.

Naoussa is famous in Greece for an almost ritualistic celebration which takes place once a year, during the Carnival. The name of it is "Boules and Yianitsari", (Brides and Janissaries). The dancers called Yianitsari wear a short foustanella, typical male costume in Greece and in some other areas of the Balkans. Kapsalis reports that 150 years earlier the "Yiannitsari" dancers didn't wear the foustanella but the old costume of the Ottoman Janissaries, in the memory of the Ottoman founders of the town. In the article he makes a detailed description of this costume, and he further explains that the Turkish costume of the Yiannitsari was turned into the Greek foustanella by the time of the Greek Governor of the town Logothetis Zafeirakis before the Holocaust of 1822. Secondly, Kapsalis mentions that the older male inhabitants were calling themselves Gazides,¹⁶ Gazi', Gazileri', like the founder of Naoussa Gazi' Evrenoz Beg. The word Gazi is an old Ottoman military title granted to the most able among the generals of the Ottoman army. Kapsalis concludes his study saving a rare popular song of post-Holocaust Naoussa in which mourners over the destroyed by the Turks town blame Rumeliot and Peloponnesian revolutionaries who also pushed the population of Naoussa to participate in the Revolution.¹⁷

A second manuscript related to the foundation of Naoussa

In 1956 Ioannis Vasdravellis publishes on *Μακεδονικά* (Βασδραβέλλης 1956) an article with the title: "Ιστορικά περί Ναούσης εξ ανεκδότου εγγράφου".¹⁸ On this article Vasdravellis reports the discovery of a 19 pages manuscript among the archive of monk Callinikos, related to the history of Naoussa. The author's name is unknown and Vasdravellis, due to orthographic and linguistic details, considers the document as the copy of an older text. The document is written in Greek. According to this Callinikos' document founder of Naoussa was Evrenoz' grandson Haji Ahmet Evrenozoglu who is reported as ancestor of illustrious later descendants of the same family, such as Selim Pascia, Ahmet Beg, Isuf Beg and Hasan Beg

¹⁶ Γαζήδες

¹⁷ «Του κρίμα ναχ' η Ρούμελη, του κρίμ' οι Μωραίτες/που σήκωσαν πανάσταση, που σήκωσαν κεφάλι,/χαλάστηκαν ινιά χουριά κι διακέντι κάστρα»

¹⁸ Historical notes on Naoussa from an inedited manuscript.

Yiannitsiotis. In 1420, when capital of the Ottoman Empire was still Edirne, the Sultan found a way to approach the Christian populations of Epirus, Macedonia and Thrace, in order to prepare the three areas for a later military expansion of the Empire to the west. The method would be to send eighteen faithful to the emperor renegades to the three provinces to indoctrinate the people in Islam. Among the eighteen was Haji Ahmet Evrenozoglu who would play the role of the chief in command of the project. Haji Ahmet used the town of Serres as general headquarters of the ambitious project, where that first day the eighteen members of the mission nailed their wooden sticks next to them and fell asleep. The day after eighteen sticks were turned into 18 plain trees, an omen showing that the mission ordered by the Sultan would be successful. The place was called: *On sekish çinar*". Thirteen of the missionaries left to the towns of Drama, Nevrokopi etc, and Haji Ahmet and four others travelled to Thessaloniki to preach the people the Islamic Law. The place they chose to preach was called *Beş Çinar*, due to the same phenomenon with five more wooden sticks turning into plain trees.

Next place of preaching was Yennice where Haji Ahmet transferred his new headquarters, at a site called *Ta Bania*, not far from the ancient capital of Macedonia, Pella, accompanied by his older son and the boy's teacher Shiah Liani (Ζεγλίνης 2006). The Sultan after learning that the religious mission undertaken by Evrenozoglu was crowned by success travelled to Yenice with his royal court where he met him. It was an unfortunate moment for Haji Ahmet when his son, playing with his horse moved it in front of the Sultan who offended enough observed to Haji Ahmet that this was prove of lack of correct education of the son, something that caused the son's execution of his own father. Later, when the Sultan approved both the missionary and his fair response to the offence Haji Ahmet begged for having a piece of land all his own as a feud. The Sultan agreed and where Naoussa was going to be founded Haji Ahmet ordered Shiah Liani to go and erect his new town. Shiah Liani, a holly man and particularly sweet in his words managed to convince Christians who lived at a remote area of Mountain Vermion to follow him and to give them a new place to inhabit. Under the direction of the wise teacher the 11 first houses were built and at the area called the "Kiosk" the Christians built his grave, since soon after the foundation Shiah Liani passed away. At his return from Mecca Haji Ahmet Evrenozoglu preferred to transport the teacher's grave from Naoussa to Yenice, offering to the people of Naoussa many privileges, such as a low *haraç* and the possibility of the inhabitants to not share their town with Ottoman Muslims, with the exception of the Judge and the *Voyvod*, who were allowed to live permanently inside the walls.¹⁹ Then he offered Naoussa as a *vakuf* to the *Valide*' Sultana. No mention on the ox-hide stratagem is referred.

The older vernacular traditions about Evrenoz and the foundation of Naoussa.

¹⁹ Always according to Callinikos' manuscript, a low sum of money should be given on an annually basis to the *Cami* of Yenice, dedicating 2 gross for the candles lit in the *turbe*' of Shiah Liani at Kiosk, in Naoussa.

The French traveller Baujour (Baujour 1797) reports the existence of a very old Turkish tradition about Evrenoz, communicated to him by one of his descendants, Abbdulrahman Evrenozoglou in the early nineteenth century. According to this family tradition Evrenoz was not only an outstanding warrior, general and politician but an unusually tall and strong man, able to carry an entire bull under his arm for several meters. He was faithful to his Master the Sultan Murad the First in every situation, even when, during a horse parade with the Sultan, one of the sons of Evrenoz surpassed the Sultan's horse, he was punished to death by his proper father for having demonstrated to be arrogant in front of both father and emperor. The Sultan thanked Evrenoz for his great achievements letting him to have as much land as he would be able to cover from dawn to dawn galloping on his horse. Evrenoz started galloping from Yenice and he went twenty kilometres to the south, at Kollakia, where he nailed his wooden club. From there he went to the rest of the four directions of the horizon covering not less than twenty kilometres and tracing a circle which would contain the NE part of today's Emathia, part of the region of Pella and a small portion of the western region of Thessaloniki. In this newly gained feud Evrenoz would become the owner of hundred villages instead of the ninety-nine that in the end he possessed, if a cock wouldn't crow earlier than the natural, letting him believe that the dawn had already arrive.

However, among the oldest oral traditions preserved in family memories of Naoussa nothing is ever mentioned about Evrenoz' ox-hide invention. In the oldest oral traditions, edited by Valsamidis, it was a Christian woman and not Evrenoz the founder of the town. An interesting article by Valsamidis (Βαλσαμίδης 2009) relates this woman with Mara, daughter of Serbia's King George Branković and spouse, in second marriage of Sultan Murad, Mehmed Fatih's father. The historical person Mara was Mehmet Fatih's stepmother and particularly privileged by him. Mara was permitted to keep her Christian faith and name until the end of her life.

According to another, totally different version of the foundation of Naoussa, *"there was a king who owned the area of Naoussa. His daughter, a smart and beautiful princess, asked as a favor from her father to have as a dowry enough land to build a town all her own and enough big to be contained into an ox-hide. Her father after his daughter unexpected request gave her his permission and she prepared a long and thin thong with which she included enough land to build a real town. In every corner she planted a plain tree, six in total, imitating the shape of a bull's skin"*. The oldest known vernacular traditions on the foundation of Naoussa are those preserved by the native families of Papanastasiou and Dymbala, reported, the first, by Eleni D. Papakonstantinou and the second by Michalis Dymbalas. (Βαλσαμίδης 2009).

The second tale is related again with a royalty, a princess that the Sultan wanted to have as his wife. As term for accepting his proposal the princess asked the Sultan's permission to build a town inside the territory covered by a cow's skin. The Sultan laughed with the term, and he granted her the permission. She used the skin of a cow as thongs, and she realized her methodical stratagem. Naoussa gained special privileges and has been private possession of all Valide' Sultanas since then.

In the end of this brief list of the oldest oral traditions related to the foundation of Naoussa, it is important to report one more which presents as responsible for the

foundation two and not one man, and these men were Abbdullah Illahi²⁰ and Theophanis, a Turk Dede (Φιλίππιδης 1881) and a Christian Saint.

A man who characterizes an entire historical period of theological fermentation in the fifteenth century Ottoman Turkey, related directly to Evrenoz' life and deeds was Shiah Liani, or Abbdullah Illahi (Δούδος 2001). Abbdullah remained in history as a man who built and expanded Sufism in Ottoman Turkey, he was a genuine representative of this School of Thought and he was the teacher of the famous Beddredin.²¹

It is generally believed that by the time of the foundation of Naoussa, Saint Theophanis of Naoussa was in the area, trying to find a good place to establish a monastery. As the oral tradition (Δούδος 2001) has it the two men, Abbdullah Illahi and Saint Theophanis met somewhere near Naoussa and they became friends, despite the difference of their faith, and the distant theological visions that they were supporting each one of them. As a matter of fact, the Christian and the Muslim worked together for the well doing of the inhabitants of the new city (Στουγιαννάκης 1924). Interesting to tell, Naoussa was first founded in order to be inhabited exclusively by Christians. This synoikismos should follow a new model all over the conquered territories of the Ottomans, according to which the Christian subjects of the Sultan should be gathered in old or new settlements for the good of the demography and the economy of the new Empire. This has been one of the ways for demonstrating the Sultan's firm decision to repopulate the lands that they were been destroyed by the wars of the conquest.

Naoussa is not the only case but is certainly one among the first examples of the good will of the Ottoman authorities to establish well balanced relations and trust with their Christian populations, in areas of dense Orthodox communities since the early post-byzantine times. The problem which arises here is that Saint. Theophanis' is still uncertain if he lived in the same period with Abbdullah Illahi (Γαβριηλίδης 2000).

Obvious prove of the engagement of the Evrenozoglu family to the foundation of Naoussa is the respect with which the people of the town treated one of his descendants in 1822, Isouf Aga, who was sent to the under siege by the Ottoman army Naoussa to deal with the revolutionaries. The Greek authorities who received Isouf Aga behind the walls considered him as the respectful descendant of "holy" Evrenoz Gazi', founder of their town (Στουγιαννάκης 1924). After the Second Balkan War between Greece and the Ottoman Empire and the liberation of Naoussa, another direct descendant of Evrenoz came to Greece claiming the compensation for his confiscated by the Greek Kingdom possessions in Naoussa and Yianitsa'. Evrenoz' relation with Naoussa has been taken as genuin historical fact, as some mayors of Thessaloniki were chosen out of the Evrenoz family, until the Greek liberation of the city in 1912.

²⁰ Known also as: Sheh Liani, Sheh Leai, Mullah Leai, and Mullah Liani.

²¹ Baddredin, student of Shiah Liani, or Abbdullah Illahi, is a famous soufi teacher and revolutionary.

Classical archetypes of foundation myths in Medieval Europe and possible mechanisms of their diffusion.

Talking about archetypes we should try first to analyze their origins. In the case of the archetype of the ox – hide as a basis for the foundation of cities, city-states, kingdoms and empires this is originated from a myth of the Mediterranean, which becomes vastly known through its Livian-Virgilian version and the Roman military and cultural expansion in Europe and the world. It seems that the myth has been spread over even beyond the borders of the Roman Limes from the legionaries and the Roman colonists who changed the map of the then world, Romanizing great part of Britain, Brittany, Celtic France, Central and Eastern Europe. After the gradual collapse of the systematic order of the Roman hegemony in Europe and the progressive contraction of its geographic expansion, several chiefdoms began to centralize their political power and to expand their territorial control over neighboring clans (Geary 2003) throughout Europe between the fifth and the eighth centuries and started to work on their state identities over the steps of the Holy Roman Empire, due to their political elites that have been highly Romanized during the late Imperial period. *“The first Europe included France, England, western Germany, Ireland, central and northern Italy, and the mountain regions of northern Spain. The vital centers of civilization were not on the Mediterranean coast, but in the river valleys of northern France and the Rhineland. The culture of the first Europe was unified by the universal language of churchmen, kings, and the aristocracy – Latin. Latin was the language of both ecclesiastical and secular governments and the tongue in which all intellectual matters were discussed or written down”* (Cantor 1993).

It is a matter of political prestige for the Frankish and Germanic chiefs to “feel” Romans, or to behave as such, when the vision of the dying, or the alright dead Roman Empire was still feeding the personal ambitions of the new macro-leaders of Europe. Since the new political formations didn’t share any real demographic, linguistic and cultural similarities with the old Roman Empire, with the exception of artificially made new-Latin versions of the old Latin, though with strong the desire to assimilate the surviving Roman political and administrative traditions in order to speculate politically with them, the emerging authorities worked hard in order to be considered the perpetrators of the Roman tradition. Norman F. Cantor gives in the best possible way the idea that: *“European medieval civilization was not produced by any one event or a series of events, but by the absorption by western Europe of certain ways of life, ideas, and religious attitudes that had prevailed for many centuries in the Mediterranean world. These ideas and values were pulled northward into western Europe – into Northern France, Southern England, Northern Italy, and the Rhine valley – and in the process, certain aspects of the Mediterranean culture were adopted and changed (it is perhaps even more significant that many aspects were not changed). Before the Middle Ages, then, there was a Mediterranean culture and society that was adopted and absorbed. An understanding of that civilization is essential to an understanding of the medieval world”* (Cantor 1993).

In fact, Germans and Frankish first and almost all the European nations later claimed for centuries up to the dawn of the modern era to be the heirs to the throne of the “Holy Roman Empire” at an attempt of having a revival of Empire. *“The Frankish kings deliberately undertook to steer the barbarian peoples of Western Europe back into*

the Roman tradition” according to A. G. Dickens (1977). Roman prestige and local versions of what “should” be “Roman” transformed the continent politically and culturally to the point of promoting a reviewed and in great part imaginary idea of Ancient Rome. Roman titles, insignia and even official nomenclature were to be used until the early twentieth century by the presumed “heir” of Ancient Rome (Settis 2004: 28). In Rome the Pontifex Maximus, now head of Western Christianity, conserved the most archaic of the Roman titles, maintaining symbolically the bridge connecting the analogy between two opposite aspects of the Idea of Rome. As possessor of an ancient Roman title of the pagan times, the Pontifex Maximus is a law giver and the one who perpetuates the values and the use of the ancient Roman legislation into the medieval era. The Lex Romana is one of the most durable elements of the old Imperium (Cahill 1995).

The Christian identity given to the new kingdoms with the “Roman” ambitious claims instead of neutralizing this imaginary vision of what was Ancient Rome and what it should be from now on Europe, preserved the revised Roman ideals under the new perspectives of a mass ethnic and cultural amalgamation which brought to new administrative units inclined to include vast regions of homogenized populi, until the eighth century. The “stimulus of Rome” enabled the emerging European kingdoms to recreate their present status reaffirming their past Romanization and after having denied it (Todd 2001).

The successful survival of the Latin language in Medieval Europe is a symptom of this claimed *Romanitas* by the administrative and ecclesiastic elites. The creation of the new – Latin languages in continental Europe and the British Islands, based on the fusion with the plethora of previous linguistic substrata, is a decisive parameter of the perpetuation of the Roman analogy between the pagan past and the Christian present in the procedure of the new systematic accommodation of cultural values. Foundation myths have been proposed pumping out models from the pagan Roman traditions. The most persisting was that of Virgilian Dido’s.

The emerging cultural chauvinism of the eighth century materializes in the figure of the Eponymous Founder, a symbolic figure with unimaginable influence over huge numbers of followers and peoples. In 799 Pope Leo III offers to Charlemagne the keys of Saint Peter and the military insignia of Rome, the Vexillum, turning a former “barbarian” into son of the Lupa Romana and member of the Populus Electus. It is a promotion based over archetypical forms to perpetuate a long line connecting Remus/Romulus to the Ottonian dynasty through Charles the Great and investing it under the crown of *Urbs Aeterna*.

Oral traditions become the histories of ethnicities that are joined under charismatic leaders needed to be set in mythological environments. The most ancient royal courts of Europe are formed inside a mythical storytelling that demands resemblances with the best of the most glorious common past (Kolstø 2005).

Dido and Alexander, two ancient archetypes of the Graeco-Roman tradition, are the manifestations of the perfectly established Kingdom. Trick and ability must be the main guidelines for the formation of a “civilized” state. There is the need of the rival King who must be won and the “barbarian” gentes who must be freed from their ignorance, barbarity, and slavery. The prototype of Alexander though, as it is

preserved in the different versions of Medieval Alexander's popular stories and inherited through the Roman ideal of the perfect leader, lead to restoration and transformation of new multiethnic states that need to prove presumed old roots after uncovering heavy layers of forgotten family memories and dynastic values (Zolla 1994: 86–87).²²

Taking the case of the royal house of Lusignan which ruled in both great part of Europe and the ancient lands of the Levant, Cyprus, and Armenia (Richardson 2011) between the tenth and the fifteenth centuries, its influence has been decisive not only as political model but as an original perpetuator of Dido's Myth throughout the realm of the collective memory of the emerging medieval European identities. Here, the real founder of the royal house is not a man, Raymond, but his consort Melusina, a woman with non-human nature, whose achievements stand at the background of the entire foundation myth. According to the legend Melusina saves the life of Raymond and she suggests him to use Dido's trick, although the hide is not made of an ox but of a wild deer. After planning the plot and suggesting it to Raymond, Melusina advances her ambitious program step by step founding important buildings, as castles and cathedrals, marking with them their skilfully earned territory. Melusina is the European counterpart of the Phoenician Dido. Both are engaged with men who are less important than they are and who receive their graceful assistance in crucial moments of their lives. The matriarchal genre of the Phoenician tradition has been transplanted into the heart of Europe through Melusina's foundation myth.

The oldest written form of the myth dates back to the fourteenth century, during the heyday of the Lusignan hegemony over almost all Europe and the British islands, when the final written version as a poem dates at one century later. Members of the Lusignan family were decorated with titles as: Prince of Antioch, Prince of Tyre, Count of Jaffa, Ascalon and Tripoli, Lord of Beirut and of Sidon, from their possessions in the Levant and North Africa. During their long presence in the Levant and North Africa it was not only the Lusignan who influenced their *gentes* but they must have been influenced strongly from them on their turn. The fact of being lords, princes and counts of ancient kingdoms should entitle them to behave as heir to old traditions both local and Roman, since these kingdoms ended as part of the great Roman mosaic of conquest.

The historical link of the Lusignan with the Levant, homeland of Dido, and its political expansion over old Roman conquests could make of them responsible for the later revival of the Phoenician myth. The Romanized myth of Dido becomes a Roman heritage to preserve and to repeat constantly in other foundation cases, insisting always on the idea of a repeated archetypical model which will turn easily into a recognizable European trademark of authenticated pedigree. Under this

²² “Il progetto di Pompeo era invece di ripristinare il mito di Alessandro Magno, che aveva ottenuto la consacrazione imperiale egizia, quella iranica e forse ambito a quella vedica. Si era trasmutato in cornuto figlio di Ammone in Egitto, con riti che parvero inesplicabili ai suoi laici Greci. Fece suo il sacro fuoco di Dario, e di lui sposo' la figlia e uccise l'assassino, assumendo così' il charisma iranico. In figura di Dioniso ebbro, ora soave ora omicida, invase l'India, ma il rajasuya, la consacrazione vedica che trasforma un re in embrione e primizia del cosmo e quindi in Imperatore, non seppe caprire”.

perspective the Lusignan foundation myth may be at the origin of all the Didonian foundation myths of medieval Europe.

And what about the ox-hide myths of western and mid Asia? Is there any reliable trace of a passage of Dido's myth from Europe to Asia? Could it be possible to theorize a potential role of the Lusignan kingdom of Great Armenia in spreading of Dido's myth beyond the geographical borders of Europe? In the fourteenth century the Lusignan take possession of the kingdom of Great Armenia, in Cilicia, through marriage. After the Mamluk conquest of this kingdom the descendants fled to France and Southeastern Russia. Even with no documented proves that they were responsible for letting the myth to become "Asiatic" the Lusignan strongly pressed their royal seal also in Asia, leaving behind them their influential handprint several thousands of miles away from Portugal, Spain, England, France, and Italy. As a matter of fact, few other royal houses have influenced so vast territories during the Middle Ages (Cantor 1993).

Further expansion of the Didonian Myth beyond space and time

European imperialism made use of the Didonian Myth, in the early modern history, as Andrew Newman (Newman 2017) shows on his paper relative to the expansion of the ancient tradition overseas. Newton collected native vernacular traditions of New York, Cambodia, Manila, Taiwan, the Cape of Good Hope, Jakarta, Gujarat, on European foundation of colonies at the respected places. In the article Newton advances the theory that Spanish, Portuguese, and Dutch colonists performed the Didonian trick in emulation of the classical homonymous tradition. The tradition which was made part of the native cultural heritage and then has been preserved into an oral form for centuries is indicative of the persistence of the theme in distant areas of the globe, supporting an obvious diffusion and transfusion of the classical motif of Dido's in the early modern history, in American, African, and Asiatic lands. Dido's Myth has been transformed, in this way, into an imperialist tool in the hands of colonists, international commercial societies, and representatives of various Christian churches of Europe. Interesting is to show how important as an element of this transfusion was considered the mythological foundation act over the steps of the Mediterranean legend of Carthage; a Mediterranean tradition, which means a diachronic European heritage, recorded, preserved, and expanded to all directions of the horizon as an early modern European activity of conquest and ownership.

In old poems (Newton 2017),²³ oral local traditions (Newton 2017)²⁴ and legends recorded by a Father of the United States (Newton 2017),²⁵ an Arab commentator (Newton 2017),²⁶ a European traveller (De Carne 1872, Newton 2017), a British

²³ The Sinhalese war poem from the seventeenth century Maha Katana describes the transaction between the Sinhalese king and the Portuguese.

²⁴ The Hikayat Hang Tuah, a Malaysian set of oral traditions, recounts the adventures of Hang Tuah, a hero of the fourteenth – fifteenth centuries of Melaka, reporting the moment of the Didonian Portuguese stratagem.

²⁵ Alexander Hamilton's notes on the Portuguese deception of the king of Guzarat of Guzara in India.

²⁶ Haji al – Dabir reports the engagement of the Portuguese with the story of the ox hide in respect of the ruler of Hormuz.

East Indian Company's agent (Stamford Raffles 1817), a Jesuit missionary (De Moyria de Mailla 1715), a Moravian missionary (Newton 2017), American writers (Fenimore Cooper 1826), and a French missionary (Arbousset 1846) repeat the description of foundation acts in the most disparate places of the world. Portuguese, Spanish, and Dutch settlers after dealing with local kings, princes and military leaders gain the necessary Τόπος to establish businessmen, settlers, and church missions. It results difficult to not remember what Archimedes said: *δός μοι πᾶ στῶ καί τὰ γὰν κινάσω*,²⁷ give me enough land and I will seek the Earth. That first step to take is reflected through a type of conquest old as the world. This: "give me enough land..." reminds the Scandinavian Holmgang's necessity for conquering more territory, and the importance the Τόπος πᾶ στῶ has for the first step to a conquest. A piece of land, a starting point to start from, the first land to make of her a new motherland and a kingdom may be small, tiny, remarkably limited. Symbol of this first starting point is the archetypical ox-hide of Dido's, of Melusina and of Evrenoz. The arising of the "new man/woman" on the social hierarchy of late Antiquity's Europe finds in this way its total symbolic meaning.

Neo-mythology in the mid nineteenth and the early twentieth century Balkans.

"Beginnings are important. The beginning sets the agenda, the tone, and the standard. Throughout Antiquity there was considerable interest in stories about beginnings, especially in those about the origins of cities, states, and peoples. Foundation myths were told across the ancient world in many different forms and through many different media. They can be found in poetry and prose, represented visually in monumental and decorative art, and played out in civic and religious rituals. Stories of origin were sometimes recounted in their entirety, forming the central narrative in a text. But even more frequently, foundation myths were alluded to obliquely or used as reference points for narratives on other subjects. Stories of beginnings and myths of foundation were ubiquitous in classical antiquity" (Mac Sweeney 2015). This is the way Mac Sweeney in her 2015 monograph describes the process of the creation of the foundation myths in the classical world.²⁸ In later centuries, during the dawn of the Modern Era, when again the Graeco - roman overidealized political concepts of the ancient Res Publica start to be promoted by the European intelligentsia as the perfect model of political society, and at the moment of the genesis of the nation-states, it's again back to the classical archetypes that these are founded. The Eponymous Founder must resemble the characteristics of an idea surviving for centuries in the subconscious of the imaginary gentes of the Balkans. He must be a hero, certainly not a common man, specially gifted with semi-divine skills. He must be a warrior and an able father to show the way to his gentes, a *Pater Familias* - *Pater Nationis*, a leader who can guarantee the well

²⁷ «τοῦτο γὰρ Ἀρχιμήδους μὲ εὖρημα μηχανικόν, ἐφῶ λέγεται εἰρηκέναι; δός μοι πᾶ στῶ καὶ κινῶ τὴν γῆν», Pappos of Alexandria, Synagoge, Book 8, «Πᾶ βῶ καὶ χαριστίωνι τᾶν γᾶν κινάσω», Diodorus Siculus, 26, 18, 1, 35. «πᾶ βῶ καὶ κινῶ τᾶν γᾶν», Simplicious, Ypomnema on Aristotles' Physika, 1110.

²⁸ Interesting to read W. Churchill in his: "The Birth of Britain: A History of the English Speaking Peoples", where he says that "the story of Arthur is a theme as significant as the Odyssey or the Old Testament", and that "it is all true, or it ought to be". Views about the approach of the genesis of nations have changed rapidly in the last 50 years.

– being of the nation. In the Balkans the axiom of the national hero has strong roots in this model of the warrior-king.

The national leader must be able in the art of the war and veteran of long and heroic fights. The model of the warrior-king is completed by the image of the statesman and law giver who must reconstruct his society of gentes after the conclusion of the wartime. Evrenoz, as representative of a new empire which engulfs a plethora of different nations during a rapid and original conquest is setting a systematic order into his campaigns and corresponds to the model of the ideal chivalrous leader, of the national father and of the charismatic man of the army on the one hand, and to the idea of the mythological figure who deserves to be considered equal to legendary figures of the past in the region of the Balkans, on the other. Evrenoz with the many talents resembles Alexander in the imagined vision of the ancient leader and he acts as the male version of Elissa/Dido and Melusina, profoundly marked in the Eurasian political subconscious.

In the “imagined communities” of the new nation-states of the Balkans the necessity for promoting diachronically stereotype images is of major importance for their *raison d’être*. Claims of territories which are historically considered ancient units which must be reset and reordered on the map of needed chauvinism are the main political goal of neighbouring and contrasting with each other neo-nations (Brunnbauer 2005). “*By the beginning of the twentieth century, an image of the Balkans had already been shaped in European literature; moreover, it was almost exclusively under the name Balkan that it was further elaborated. The geographic discovery was going hand in hand with a simultaneous invention of the region; the two processes are in fact, inseparable*”, Todorova (1997) says. Ancient Macedonia is the imaginary territory to be claimed and to be re – located as vital legendary component of the new national identities of its people (Gori et alii 2017).²⁹

After the first Ottoman Constitutional Act in 1876 (Βακαλόπουλος 2018) the political amalgamation which has been promoted by the Ottoman Empire for almost 6 centuries in the Balkans was replaced by a radiant ethnogenesis, accompanied by vast nationalistic movements which were proposed as restoration of a lost, ancient order (Stavrianos 1963: 6–7). New traditions, shown as ancient were suggested by “*intellectuals and politicians who transformed romantic, nationalistic traditions into political programs*” (Geary 2003).

In the artificially designed new borders of the Balkans, traced by the arising new national leaders in the Balkans (Winniffrith 1995), there was no space for any more multiethnic traditions (Todorova 1997). Local traditions, instead, national memories and dialects, languages and forms should take shape over the old Ottoman map (Gori et alii 2017). The spectre of the Ottoman Union under the Sultan had to be removed once forever, and it was something planned and put in use successfully. The old values of the polyethnic empires have been mystified into skeletons in the closet of the new nation-states. Transplanting forgotten and newly remembered relics was a practice of a quasi-talismanic character.

²⁹ Still happening in large or small scale in the Balkans.

Alexander becomes again the most venerated political persona of the Balkans. Macedonia emerges again as a territory to be claimed again by the former “slaves”, inventing the new borders over the vanished traces of the ancient ones.

“The ethnically based nation – states of today have been described as ‘imagined communities’, called into being by the creative efforts of nineteenth – century intellectuals, archaeologists and politicians, who transformed earlier, romanticized traditions into ideological programs”, Geary notices correctly (Geary 2003), and Hahn mentions the term: *“primordialist notion of ethnicity”* (Hahn 2017: 42).

In the effort of *“perceiving the historical myths as foundational narratives, as stories that purport to explain the present in terms of some momentous event that occurred in the past”*, the nineteenth century historiographers mobilize in all possible senses every available myth, turning it into mythistory. The case of the Balkan town of Naoussa, with its proper part in Evrenoz’ mythographic life told by Platarides and Stougiannakis could be an indicative case study. In the case of the new-mythology of the foundation of Naoussa it’s the Ottoman version of this mid nineteenth century chauvinism which is taking place with the support of the Christian party of the *çorbacı* as the most privileged by the Ottomans part of the local subjects.

The mechanism built and functioned by the emerging new nation-states of the Balkans now is tried by the representatives of the old status quo too, which after the Tanzimat, must be re-promoted and re-distributed, according to the new political philosophy followed by the claimers of the Sultan’s lands. If the Macedonians recall the memory of Alexander (Oikonomidis et alii 2014), Philip and Amyntas, if the Serbs start unveiling their revolutionary flags with the name of Stephen Dushan on them, Bosnians reconsider their national hero Hussein-bey Gradiscević, Croatians remember their Nikola Šubić Zrinski (Žanić 2005), Albanians and Greeks feel again over their heads the shadow of heroic Skenderbeu (Oikonomidis et alii 2011–2013, Hodgkinson 1999), the old Ottomans can promote, in the same way, the idol to whom their Empire owed the conquest of the Balkans: Gazi’ Evrenoz Beg.

The re-promotion of Gazi’ Evrenoz achievements, real or imaginative, was not necessary to be the job of Ottoman officers, the Sultan, or of other authorities of the Ottoman government. In the case of Naoussa the Greek subjects themselves could remind the connection of the foundation of their town to the legendary warrior in pseudohistorical or mythological terms, since this could provide them protection, attention and less troubles with the Turks. In 1854 a new revolt burst out in Chalcidice which didn’t have the expected results and new repression measures would be methodically taken against the Christian subjects throughout Macedonia. The memories of the terrible holocaust of 1822’s Naoussa were still fresh, at the moment of the restart of the economy of Naoussa and with several new industries conquering the Balkan markets rapidly. To demonstrate their non connection with any further revolts and complots, reminding that Naoussa was considered protégé of the Valide’ Sultana after its foundation by a real and glorious Turk would be primal priority.

When traveller and chronicler Evlya’ Çelebi’ writes his report on Naoussa in 1668 mentions that the town was vakuf of Gazi’ Evrenoz Beg but he doesn’t refer anything about the myth of the ox-hide. Difficult is to believe that Çelebi’, who was

a great collector of local legends didn't have the opportunity of learning about an odd story such as that of the ox-hide affair of the famous Gazi'. Gavrielides says (Γαβριελίδης 1999) that it is very probable that the legend of the ox – hide should be dated after the year 1668, two hundred years after the supposed deeds of Evrenoz in Naoussa. The lack of data related to the ox-hide stratagem in both Çelebi's report and Abbdulrahman Evrenozoglu's tradition communicated by Baujour are indicative for the posterior dating of the myth and they must be taken in serious consideration.

Further similarities and similia between the narratives of Evrenoz' life and the classical Greek and Roman Archetypes

Through the prism of Platarides'/Stugiannakis' narrative Evrenoz is presented as a savior to the locals of the Vermion Mountain since he civilizes their rough ways giving them Civitas. His figure turns to them from a suspected renegade conqueror into a Pater. He is the creator of a rich Urbs after establishing a brand-new Oppidum following the prototype of Carthage's foundation. He is followed by his own Pontifex Maximus, Shah Liani, who becomes the mediator with the new gentes, playing the role of the Pons Facere. He doesn't hesitate to be a tough judge even over members of his own family, promoting a traditional Jus which has to be respected by everyone. His dynasty is not a legend but a historical fact. Evrenoz is acting more as a local Caesar than as a Patrician of his Emperor. His military achievements are genuine and historically proved. In other historical contexts he might be another Alexander the Macedon, having once again as headquarters Pella. However, Alexander's archetype, as that of Dido's, has been stably used throughout both the historical and the legendary narrative of Evrenoz. The story of Evrenoz, in terms of an Illud Tempus (Eliade 1963: 19) or as a "*primordial mythical time that precedes historical time, is therefore beyond historical verification or refutation*", paraphrasing Eliade.

What follows the Didonian stratagem of Evrenoz in the foundation myth of Naoussa is the way that he establishes the boundaries of the town, which is in conjunction of the Roman tradition. According to Platarides/Stougianakis text Gazi' Evrenoz nailed four sticks made of plain tree at the four points of the horizon, tracing a big cross on the ground. Then he closed this area using the strip of the ox-hide, which means he practiced *περισχοινισμό* (Λαγόπουλος 2002: 242–243) and separating the outer space from the inner space. Miraculously the sticks turned into real plain trees after a while, which some of them still exist nowadays and indicate the old borders of the town (Λαγόπουλος 2002: 242–243).³⁰ Here we have the ancient Roman pattern of the typical Urbs, based on the crossed roads of the *Cardo Maximus* and the *Decumanus*. One could easily compare it with the original Greek urban model of the *Isodomic System*, as well. Roman *Solcus*, or *Isodomic system* of the crossed main roads is indifferent since the description reflects a particularly old practice for tracing the foundations of a settlement in the Graeco-Roman tradition. In the Evrenoz' foundation myth is obvious the necessity for a better

³⁰ Barlaouta to the North, Stravos to the West, Koufios to the East, and Poliana to the Southwest.

living, in urban terms and conditions, as it is obvious the concern for order through a carefully designed urban space (Burns & Eadie 2001).

Urban amenities and comforts are expected to provide water supplies, stable residences, possibilities for trade activities, all of this into a grid – plan of streets which is necessary element for progress and wealth. In contrast to the previous precarious living at Palioniaousta, far from roads of communication, the foundation of a “Roman like” town suggested, organized, and set in motion by Gazi’ Evrenoz saved the former “savages” from certain extinction.

Skepticism and “how old Platarides’ manuscript could be?”

According to what we know, the manuscript of Platarides, dates back to the time of the Tanzimat. We soon realize that the existence of this presumed manuscript is suspiciously engaged to a supposed family tradition, which survived through the last generations of the Evrenozoglu dynasty. In any case, it’s more than interesting that what we have in our hands of all this obscure tradition has been preserved and promoted in Greek, then, published always in Greek, by a Greek teacher of Naoussa. Until recently the people of Naoussa consider the total of this tradition as genuine. Since the “History” written by Platarides appears in the mid nineteenth century we must investigate the historical circumstances of that period in Naoussa and in the Vilayet of Veroia. After the failed efforts of the revolutionaries for incorporating the revolution of Macedonia to the general Greek War of Independence which was already counting more than a year’s successful campaigns in southern Greece and the Peloponnesus, Naoussa was raised to the ground by order of Abdül Abbut, Grand Vizier of Thessaloniki. The surviving revolutionaries escaped to Thessaly, Sporades Islands and the Peloponnesus where they continued to fight. Thousand-five hundred among the captured, Christian population were executed publicly at Kioski, and the rest were sold in the slave market of Thessaloniki, at Bayram Pazari, and elsewhere. The total of the buildings in town were destroyed by fire, except for few families that kept a neutral position during the revolution. Naoussa remained uninhabited by its Christian elements for more than ten years.

Despite the general amnesty given by the Sultan, which was not in any sense valid for those considered responsible for the revolution, the inhabitants who gained back their freedom demanded to have returned their land possessions in order to return to town, something impossible in that moment since the imperial authorities made in time to redistribute the former Christian lands to Muslims invited for the first time in Naoussa’s history to settle inside its walls. The Petridis and Kyrtis families, due to the special privileges given by the Sultan and preserved for almost one hundred years, convinced the authorities to come to a review of their decision and only then the surviving original population started to re-enter the town, something which didn’t take place until the late 1830’s. The following period was marked by good efforts to live in peace of those who reestablished in Naoussa, with no compromises with both authorities and the newly settled Koniari Turks.

A new chapter in Naoussa's history was opened in the 1840's with new and old Christian subjects populating it,³¹ whilst the Muslim newcomers settled along the NW side of the previous to the Holocaust borders of the town.³² Until the mid 1860's, when the first wool factories appear, Naoussa was totally reorganized on a new architectural model and with new economic and social perspectives. In this critical point a new revolt takes place in southern Macedonia and Naoussa this time doesn't participate (Βακαλόπουλος 2018) and doesn't respond to wide open provocations. It's time of reconstruction after experiencing the wildest possible punishment, few decades earlier. We will never know whether it's the Ottoman authorities responsible for the creation and divulgation of Platarides' story, or Platarides himself who divulgates a semi fake, semi legendary tale in order to remind to the Turks and to everyone that Naoussa has been for centuries a loyal to the Sultans town, privileged and independent, founded by the major Ottoman general, and vakuf of the Valide' Sultanas.

An attempt to write “history” in the late nineteenth century's Ottoman Empire

In 1881 Nikolaos Philippides publishes in Athens his *Revolution and Catastrophe of Naoussa* (Μήτσιαλα – Ζεργκίνη 1998), a short history of the facts that lead the town in total destruction in 1822. Philippides' family was a local family of warriors who fought in both the battles against Ali Pascia's raids to Naoussa, in 1795 and in 1805. He was grown with the stories his parents were telling at home. He was educated in Thessaloniki and in Athens. In 1886 he was sent to Macedonia as director of the Greek Schools of Florina. With Thomas Paschides, Philippides joined the New Filiki' Etaireia, a Greek organization for the liberation from the Ottomans and soon they acted as main agents, travelling all over northern Greece, Epirus and Macedonia, having as headquarters Monastir, in Northern Macedonia.

It's Philippides' *Revolution and Catastrophe of Naoussa* that makes the holocaust of 1822 widely known to the public for the first time beyond the borders of the Ottoman Empire when the Ottoman authorities recognize him as a dangerous for the Empire element. On May 23, 1888, he is captured together with other members of the New Filiki' Etaireia and in 1889 he is transferred to Fezan, in Tripolitania of Libya in permanent exile. His odyssey finishes two years later only instead, when with the support of European political persons, he manages to gain back his

³¹ Several Christian subjects of Naoussa who were sold in the Bayram Pazar in Thessaloniki, and the main slave markets of Edessa and Veroia managed to be freed from the status of slavery some years later and returned to their homeland. Relatives and descendants of warriors who were considered responsible for the revolt against the Sultan and survived from slaughtering and/or slavery returned to Naoussa, known as the generation of the rebirth of the town. Until the end of the Ottoman occupation descendants of personalities who fought in 1822 kept their family background veiled, or they changed more than once their family name. Typical is the case of the Dimou family, which traced back its origins to the notorious Dimos Dimou, or Delidimos, *kleftarmatolos* and descendant himself of the owners of the *Armatolikion* of Ano Megas Ayiannis. Having participated in the Revolution of 1822 was not a subject openly discussed in Naoussa, until 1912, the year of the incorporation of Northern Greece to the Greek Kingdom.

³² It is worth mentioning that in that instance the Christian family of Mamantis offers to the newly settled Muslims the lot of land for the construction of the mosque.

freedom. Philippides is a typical case of a nineteenth century reporter who instead of using myths focuses on historical facts, collecting information from the victims of the Holocaust in Naoussa and using the bibliography, both Greek and foreign, related to the 1822 events. He is a historian with the fervor of a reporter and not a storyteller. He writes and he doesn't invent, even under the mantle of fermenting nationalism which is characteristic of his epoch. In the Turkish dominions of northern Greece to write real history, or at least to reproduce reports of real facts contrasting the Empire was practically impossible by that time. Life and times of Philippides prove this repression. History at the dawn of the twentieth century in the Ottoman Empire is and must remain Mythistory.

Conclusions

The myth of the ox-hide as basic element of a largely extended foundation myth in Eurasia during the Middle Ages has been diachronically used for political purposes and as a demonstration of possession of a long lost "Romanitas", an invented Roman lineage for the ideological support of new kingdoms, empires, and local baronies. The apparently "solo" case of Naoussa's foundation proves the durable character of this ox-hide narrative in nineteenth century Macedonia, birthplace of Greek and Roman traditions and symbolic locus of the ancient, classical past, par excellence. The nineteenth century survival of Dido's foundation myth, composed according to the same motives found throughout the continent and mixed with other classical elements reminding Alexander's political behavior over his subjects appears when the Ottoman sovereignty in the Balkans loses ground on the one hand, and on the other at a moment of obvious economic re-flourishing of the town of Naoussa, after a particularly tough punishment by the Ottoman authorities due to the failed revolution of 1822.

Evrenoz re-appears in the mid 1800s as a paternal protector of the Christian subjects of the town, as an able founder who offered to the ancestors of these subjects' possibilities for a better life, political freedom and even independence. The creation of a newly written narrative, in Greek and by the hands of Christian subjects, based on different versions of semi-legendary, semi-historical and verbally kept traditions is an effort for a compromise between subjects and authorities during the period of regaining economic, political, and social wealth.

The Christians of Naoussa have to prove their recognition of the Ottoman sovereignty over them in order to get back their lost privileges over their territory, their possessions and themselves. Despite the existence of numerous different versions of the foundation of Naoussa that survive until the early twentieth century, preserved from mouth to mouth for at least six centuries, in Platarides' unpublished text but safely re-written and advertised as the official history of the foundation of Naoussa by Stougiannakis, only what is connected to Gazi' Evrenoz Beg memory is taken as genuine and authentic, excluding any other parallel traditions about the foundation of the town. The case of Naoussa's foundation myth is characteristic of how resisting ancient traditions, legends, neo-mythologies, political archetypes, political and economic speculation can be, decisive for the common acceptance of

mythistory as genuine, historical fact at a time when myths were re-proposed as a mechanism creating new nation consciousness.

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Brexit, la “rivolta populista” e il futuro dell’archeologia¹

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I referendum, come qualsiasi altra occasione di espressione democratica, bruciano tutti i filtri della propaganda mediatica e ti sbattono in faccia la pubblica opinione. Per noi è una benedizione, una volta ogni tanto, poter testare teorie sociali su numeri ed evidenze dirette, anziché su percezioni e fonti frammentarie. E facciamocene una ragione: l’archeologia nel mondo è ormai scienza sociale e bene lo sa chi partecipa ai bandi per i finanziamenti alla ricerca, come chi, sul binario parallelo, lavora a contatto col pubblico. Non prestare attenzione e azione al contemporaneo rischia di relegare l’archeologia fra le scienze dell’antichità, condannandola quindi all’irrilevanza sociale.

Un’occasione unica per riflettere sui meccanismi socio-politici in corso e su quale archeologia vogliamo per il futuro ce la dà il caso Brexit, i suoi postumi e l’*hangover* collettivo che qui in Regno Unito ancora domina più sovrano della monarchia stessa.

A distanza di due anni dal referendum, il Regno Unito deve ancora elaborare il lutto. O, più propriamente, si arrovela per trovare l’accordo migliore. Non se ne discute solo ai piani alti, ma anche nei pub, così come all’università, uno dei comparti che più risente dello scossone anti-europeo. Ma in che misura? Quali ripercussioni vediamo già nel nostro settore?

Se ne è parlato un paio di settimane fa in un acceso workshop-tavola rotonda tenutosi al dipartimento di archeologia della Durham University dal titolo “*Building Bridges between Iberian and British Archaeology*”, organizzato da un gruppo molto attivo di colleghi iberici, Blanca Ochoa, David González-Álvarez, Francisco Martínez-Sevilla e Jonathan Santana-Cabrera (v. nel programma link in basso).

In quella occasione è emersa la frattura sociale profonda che il referendum ha certificato fra centri e periferie del sistema, una fotografia lucidissima del modello *core-periphery* mutuato dalla *World-System Theory* di Wallerstein (v. anche Kristiansen, Bintliff, etc.). La mappa del voto mostra esattamente questa dinamica polarizzata: chi risiede nei centri maggiori e più beneficia del flusso di beni, denaro e idee dal continente ha scelto di rimanere parte del network sovranazionale, mentre gli abitanti delle aree marginali e rurali hanno sfruttato l’unica chance concessagli per bruciare i ponti (fig.1).

¹ Article published online as a blog entry on the Ex Novo-website in July 2018 (see comments [here](#)).

EU Referendum A Divided Kingdom

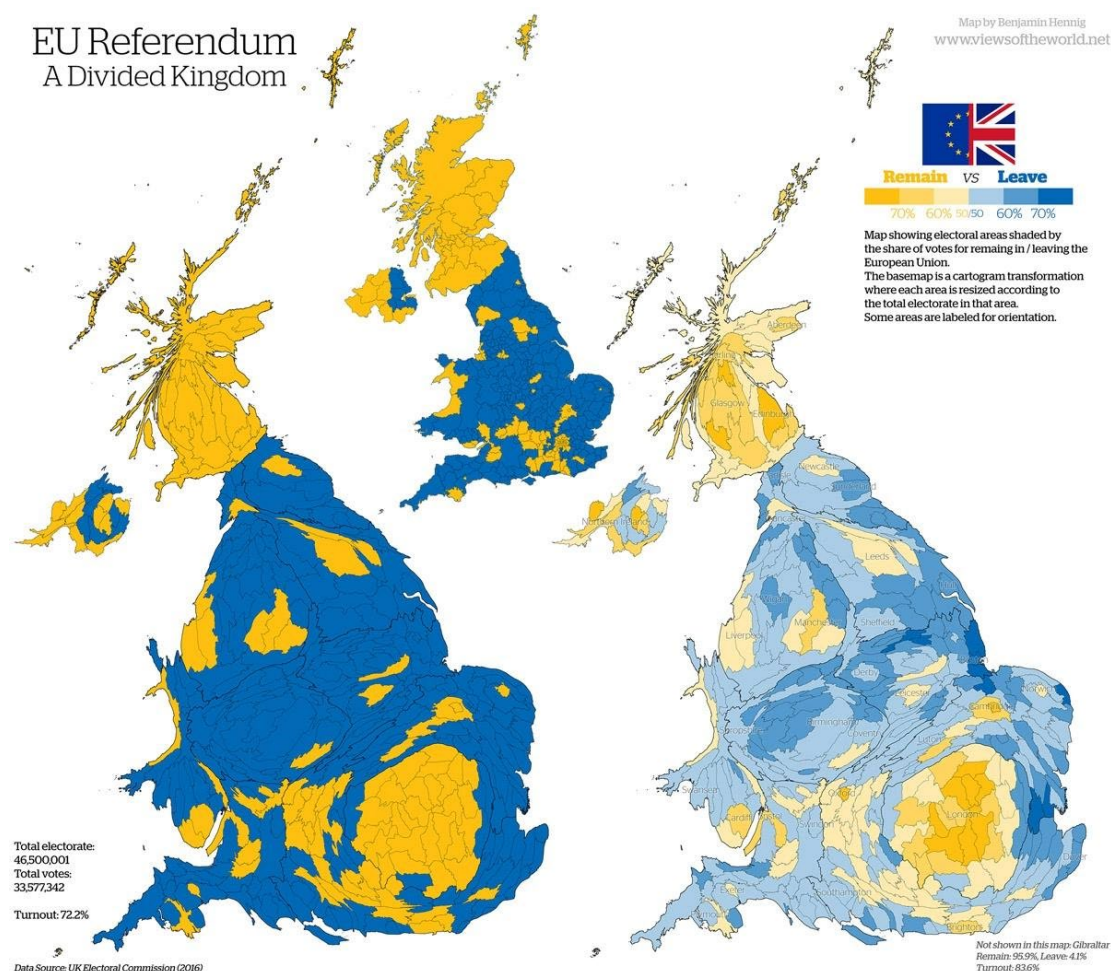


Figure 1. Risultati del referendum EU in Inghilterra: distribuzione geografica delle aree elettorali a predominanza “remain” (in giallo) e “leave” (in blu). Data source UK Electoral Commission 2016.

Sia che simpatizziamo con i *leavers* o i *remainers*, questo è il risultato; e il mio scopo qui non è dare giudizi politici, ma discuterne, soprattutto per quel che riguarda le implicazioni sul futuro dell’archeologia.

In un recente, interessante libro intitolato “*The Road to Somewhere. The populist revolt and the future of politics*” (fig.2), il giornalista David Goodhart lega le due propensioni al voto a un’efficace contrapposizione fra due categorie di persone, due prototipi umani ampiamente distribuiti nel globo, ma emersi con prepotenza nel corso delle vicende recenti: i cosiddetti “*somewheres*” (per lo più pro-Brexit) e gli “*anywheres*” (per lo più anti-Brexit):

“*The old distinctions of class and economic interest have not disappeared but are increasingly over-laid by a larger and looser one –between the people who see the world from Anywhere and the people who see it from Somewhere. ‘Anywheres’ dominate our culture and society*” (p.112).

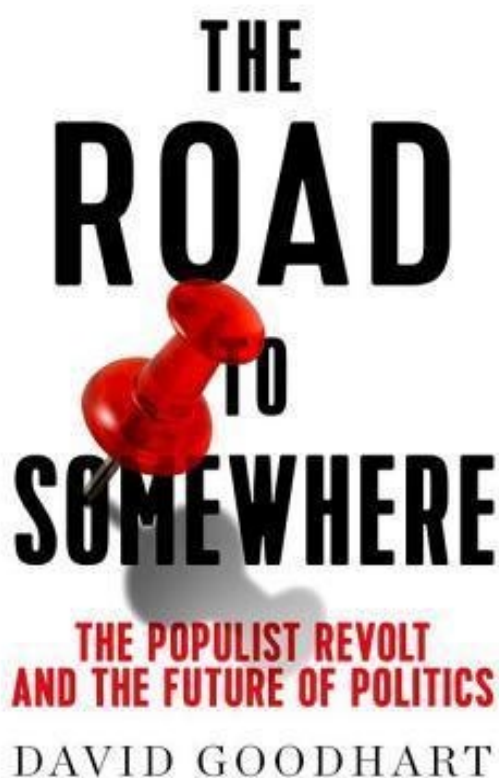


Figure 2. “The Road to Somewhere. The populist revolt and the future of politics” di David Goodhart.

Il grado di mobilità, insieme alla percezione del mondo che porta con sé, diventa così il discrimine principale. Nella definizione di Goodhart, gli *anywheres* sono più mobili, cosmopoliti, portatori di idee liberali (specialmente delle libertà individuali), vivono prevalentemente nelle città medie, grandi e meglio connesse, si caratterizzano per un tipo di lavoro più intellettuale, un tipo di conoscenza e competenze a-territoriali, che possono essere, cioè, spese efficacemente in qualunque parte del globo e che di norma garantiscono loro salari più elevati. Qualcuno potrebbe definirlo *establishment*, qualcun altro la chiama “élite cognitiva”, ma non lo è necessariamente o esclusivamente, anche perché si stima che in Inghilterra, come negli altri paesi occidentali con leggere variazioni, gli *anywheres*

rappresentino circa il 25% della popolazione (v. note al primo capitolo).

Dall'altra parte ci sono i *somewheres*, circa il 50% della popolazione, più radicati sul territorio, con esperienze ed expertise più locali, residenti in aree rurali o meno nodali, più affezionati alle tradizioni e ai doveri verso la comunità che alle libertà individuali.

Ovviamente non è tutto bianco o nero. Ci sono anche gli *inbetweeners*, il restante 25%, quelli che fanno pendere la bilancia dall'una o dall'altra parte. Fra le posizioni intermedie ci sono le esperienze miste, due esempi fra tutti: gli *anywheres* con un forte radicamento sul territorio (ad esempio spesso le élite locali), o i *somewheres* che emigrano per lavoro e acquisiscono un modo di pensare più cosmopolita.

Consiglio la lettura del libro, però qui mi interessa vedere se è possibile applicare la distinzione *anywheres* e *somewheres* al settore dell'archeologia e come la relazione fra di loro può condizionare il futuro della disciplina.

Nel rapporto DISCO 2014 della C.I.A. (Confederazione Italiana Archeologi) si stimava che in Italia più della metà di chi lavora nel settore pubblico dell'archeologia lo fa *somewhere*, ossia in un'istituzione con un legame forte con il territorio (soprintendenze, musei), mentre circa un terzo in accademia o in altro ente di ricerca, a vocazione necessariamente più universalistica (Pintucci & Cella, p. 16). Questo non significa che le università non operino sui territori (v. la crescente importanza dell'“impact” sociale o “terza missione” nei progetti di ricerca) o che, al contrario, non esistano musei orientati verso un target più ampio di quello locale (soprattutto nei grandi centri, assai meno nelle aree marginali), ma la tendenza alla polarizzazione esiste, specialmente per quel che concerne i destinatari del prodotto culturale: la popolazione locale o un'audience nazionale/internazionale.

Pensiamo anche alle differenze impressionanti fra le modalità di selezione dei funzionari MiC e quelle che riguardano le carriere di ricerca. Da una parte le preselezioni si basano su test a crocette su tematiche per l'80% almeno non inerenti alle discipline archeologiche, come a testare di più la

capacità di abnegazione che la competenza professionale del candidato, dall'altra i criteri usati per gli enti di ricerca si concentrano sui titoli accademici.

Diamo anche un'occhiata ai salari (p. 97). I salari massimi degli archeologi *anywhere* (prevalentemente accademici) ammontano a 70000 euro l'anno, mentre coloro che lavorano sui territori, sia nel settore pubblico (musei, soprintendenze, etc.) sia privato (società, cooperative, freelance, etc.), i *somewhere*, non superano i 36000; stesso trend anche in Regno Unito (<https://www.theguardian.com/science/2017/jun/20/trouble-brewing-british-archaeology>).

Va da sé che questa disuguaglianza salariale non facilita la collaborazione interpersonale e interistituzionale, e tende a creare tensioni all'interno della categoria, soprattutto quando la mobilità fra i vari rami del settore è quasi nulla come accade in Italia.

Fortunati gli accademici? Tutt'altro, almeno non i giovani. La "rivoluzione accademica" degli ultimi anni, come quella industriale dell'800 (fig.3), ha trasformato il lavoro di ricerca in una catena di montaggio, con ricercatori spesso alienati e precari, costretti ad una produzione scientifica che premia più la quantità che la qualità, mentre i grandi publisher col potere di accettare o meno i loro lavori (facendosi pagare a peso d'oro l'open access), tengono in pugno il loro destino professionale. Anche se questo clima "fordista" è radicato negli istituti di ricerca degli Stati Uniti o del nord Europa (ma in misura crescente anche in Spagna) più che in Italia, è facile prevedere che anche il nostro paese, coi suoi tempi, si adeguerà.



Figure 3. In alto: Fabbrica di sigarette di “El Buen Tono” a Città del Messico (1903). In basso: i laboratori di biologia dell’Università di Harvard (2017).

Il Regno Unito, nonostante l'esito del referendum, continua a detenere la golden share dei grants, sia per quello che riguarda le Marie Curie Fellowship, sia come istituzioni ospitanti gli ERC starting, consolidator e advanced grant (v. i link qui sotto). L'emorragia dei cervelli europei verso le istituzioni britanniche continua e non sembra attenuarsi. Si vedrà all'uscita vera e propria dalla UE (29 marzo 2019), ma il sospetto è che su questa parte dell'accordo vi sia una certa flessibilità da ambo le parti, anche perché ci si chiede se la maggioranza delle istituzioni dei paesi meridionali e orientali dell'UE siano preparate, tanto dal punto di vista amministrativo e delle strutture quanto della mentalità e della lingua, ad ospitare ricercatori stranieri.

Sempre parlando di politiche accademiche a livello europeo, uno dei problemi principali è la tendenza a non premiare i progetti di ricerca che prevedono attività di scavo e con esse i lavori monografici, in favore invece di quelli che hanno come obiettivo una serie di articoli mirati su riviste sì di rilevanza internazionale, ma assolutamente settoriali, quindi privi di impatto sociale per le comunità e i territori. I motivi del diniego sono vari, ma questo pone un'ulteriore questione: che tipo di archeologia vogliamo per il futuro? Se l'allocazione delle risorse seguirà il trend attuale, prevedo un allargarsi a dismisura del baratro tra archeologia del (e per il) territorio, degli scavi di archeologia preventiva, delle identità locali, e archeologia "globale", in un riflesso di ciò che è accaduto con il caso Brexit, ma anche nelle ultime elezioni politiche e del referendum del 4 dicembre 2016 in Italia. Più la faglia *core-periphery* si amplia, più c'è bisogno di fare come i nostri colleghi iberici: "*building bridges*", specialmente fra *anywheres* e *somenwheres*, rafforzando prima di tutto la mobilità professionale, ma anche le politiche di integrazione e di riduzione delle disuguaglianze fra le due categorie.

Invece ho l'impressione di osservare l'esatto contrario. Uno degli aspetti più controversi della faccenda è che a prescindere dalla loro nazionalità, gli archeologi (in particolar modo accademici) e in generale gli operatori del settore cultura hanno mantenuto nei confronti della cosiddetta "rivolta populista" che attraversa l'Europa e gli Stati Uniti una posizione *anywhere*, diffondendo su stampa e social un messaggio globalista che, comunque la si pensi, rimane evidentemente inascoltato se non addirittura ridicolizzato dall'altra parte della barricata.

Se è vero che ad ogni *anywhere* corrispondono statisticamente due *somenwheres*, e se è corretto dire che (ancora) "dominano la nostra cultura e società", allora dispongono anche del potere social-mediatico per ricostruire i ponti, rivedendo una parte del loro pensiero, soprattutto quella che negli ultimi 30 anni ha messo l'individuo, le sue libertà e le sue ambizioni davanti ai doveri verso la comunità (parola cara alla sinistra), verso il prossimo (per i cattolici), verso la madrepatria (per i conservatori): tre facce della stessa medaglia.

Molti si sentiranno bersagliati dalla provocazione e già immagino alcune delle possibili reazioni. Come si fa ad incatenare le discipline umanistiche alla terra? Le scienze umane sono le ali, la chiave per ogni dove. L'uomo è *universalis*, non particolare. Travalica e trascende lo spazio fisico ed epistemologico. Particolari sono i gruppi, le corporazioni, le singole identità e l'identità è mito, ossessione, invenzione, finzione, limite, pregiudizio, "parola avvelenata" (Remotti 1996, 2010). A Remotti risponderei che, se ritiene che fra i *somenwheres* non si sappia riconoscere il "valore dell'alterità", e che si coltivi l'ossessione al "noi" puro, la sua esperienza di questa categoria di individui, almeno nel nostro paese, è piuttosto limitata. La sua è un'idea forse non del tutto sbagliata, ma molto, molto parziale, schierata e a sua volta costruita.

Questo non significa che l'archeologia non sia scienza umana: è humanities, con l'ambizione da qualche tempo di fare la dura, ma anche con la frustrazione perenne di non essere esatta. Ma se è vero che è anche scienza sociale, allora da qualche parte (*somenwhere*) dovremmo pure cominciare ad applicarla.

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Tutto l'ambaradan* intorno alla rimozione dei monumenti agli schiavisti: Critica (un po') ragionata.¹

Much 'Ambaradan' about slave drivers' monuments: A critical (just a tad) review.*

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*Ambaradan è un termine utilizzato in italiano per definire una situazione di confusione: deriva dalla battaglia dell'Amba Aradam in Etiopia, svoltasi nel 1936, al termine della quale i soldati italiani, comandati dal Gen. Badoglio, compirono una strage di civili etiopi. Il vincitore di quella battaglia, risolta con l'uso del gas iprite, il Generale Pietro Badoglio, fu anche il primo Presidente del Consiglio dei Ministri dopo la caduta del Fascismo in Italia. Il termine è ancora oggi nell'uso comune del parlato e nella toponomastica delle città italiane, senza che se ne ricordi più il terribile significato originario.

**Ambaradan is an Italian term used to define chaos: it derives from the battle of Amba Aradam in Ethiopia, which took place in 1936, where the Italian soldiers, commanded by Gen. Badoglio, carried out a massacre of Ethiopian civilians. The winner of this battle, resolved with the use of mustard gas, General Pietro Badoglio, was also the first President of the Council of Ministers after the fall of Fascism in Italy. The term is still in the common use of speech and in the toponym of Italian cities, while its terrible original meaning is often forgotten.*

Scrivo questo pezzo di getto, nei giorni delle proteste in America e poi in tutto il mondo, per la morte di George Perry Floyd, un uomo afroamericano che a Minneapolis è morto soffocato dopo essere stato brutalmente arrestato e trattenuto a terra per 9 minuti da un poliziotto, per aver pagato un pacchetto di sigarette con una banconota da 20 dollari apparentemente falsa.

L'onda della protesta, che ha portato in piazza migliaia di persone in tutti gli Stati Uniti, con scontri violenti e anche alcuni morti, si è rapidamente propagata in tutto il mondo occidentale: il tema della violenza della polizia e del razzismo contro le comunità afroamericane ha scosso in maniera forse irreversibile l'opinione pubblica, soprattutto quella parte che da anni si batte per un cambiamento che stenta a vedersi.

In questo piccolo intervento, non mi occuperò della questione centrale di questo dibattito, certo di poter dire solo cose scontate e banali, ma della mia particolare posizione su un

¹ Article published online as a blog entry on the Ex Novo-website in June 2020 (see comments [here](#)).

fenomeno collegato, quello della rimozione, soprattutto in Europa, di statue e simboli legate alla rappresentazione mitizzata ed eroica di personaggi che si sono arricchiti con la tratta degli schiavi africani.

Accade in questi giorni a Bristol, per esempio, che un nutrito gruppo di militanti antirazzisti, dopo aver a lungo chiesto al Comune di rimuovere la statua di un personaggio, di cui non vale la pena di ricordare il nome, che fece la sua fortuna trasportando qualcosa come 100000 schiavi dall'Africa in America, abbia deciso, in parte anche sull'onda della mobilitazione globale per la morte di Floyd George, di rimuovere la statua e di gettarla in acqua. Un atto di rottura, definitivo, che il comune di Bristol avrebbe a lungo potuto evitare in tanti modi, spostando la statua o mettendo una targa che commemorasse le vittime, per esempio, come chiedevano i militanti.

In questi stessi giorni il Museum of London affida alla propria pagina Facebook, un post in cui annuncia di aver intrapreso le pratiche per la rimozione di una statua di un altro schiavista, collocata vicino la sede londinese del museo dei Docks, e di altri elementi



presenti nell'area, che ricordano il passato coloniale e schiavista delle compagnie che lì avevano sede.

È importante sottolineare che sia il Museum of London, che quello di Bristol hanno dedicato una parte importante della propria esposizione al racconto delle vicende storiche legate alla tratta degli schiavi e alla colonizzazione del Nuovo Mondo.

Dunque, tutto bene. Eppure. Eppure, qualche dubbio io lo nutro, evidentemente non sulle buone, anzi buonissime intenzioni degli autori del gesto di Bristol e della Direzione del Museum of London.

Figure 1. Robert Milligan statue at the Museum of London Docklands. By Tubantia - Own work (CC BY-SA 3.0 <https://commons.wikimedia.org/w/index.php?curid=6035776>)

Discutendo con altri colleghi e leggendo le reazioni di altre persone che si occupano di Cultural Heritage, ho potuto constatare che le posizioni sono abbastanza diverse.

Chi difende la posizione della rimozione di questi simboli, sostiene, non senza valide ragioni, che ciò che rende un bene Heritage è legato al contesto: un oggetto, una statua, un monumento, possono essere considerati in un momento storico come elementi da proteggere, rappresentando quel tempo o la sua eredità, e possono poi diventare elementi da cancellare, dimenticare, in un periodo diverso: è accaduto e accade tuttora con le opere dei regimi totalitari e dittatoriali, si pensi alle scene recentemente passate anche in televisione dell'abbattimento delle statue dei vecchi eroi comunisti nell'Europa orientale, o alle scene dell'abbattimento delle statue di Saddam Hussein in Iraq, ma anche nel remoto passato, alla pratica di abradere da un monumento il nome di un imperatore caduto in disgrazia o di abbatterne l'effigie (toccò anche al colosso di Nerone).

Ma in questi casi, appena elencati, la vicinanza materiale e temporale delle persone con i fatti e i personaggi che quelle statue avevano eretto e rappresentato, dà loro un diritto, sacrosanto, di scegliere cosa fare di quei simboli, anche e soprattutto di distruggerli. Mi pongo, invece, la domanda se questo comportamento abbia senso molti anni dopo quegli avvenimenti, quando la storicizzazione di quegli eventi e di quegli oggetti, li trasforma, ne diminuisce la carica ideologica, con l'allontanarsi dei ricordi dolorosi e vivi nelle menti dei sopravvissuti.

E infatti in tutta Europa, i monumenti del fascismo e del nazismo, che per le ragioni più varie non furono distrutti con la guerra o immediatamente dopo, sono stati preservati, pur con diversi atteggiamenti.

Si pensi alla vicenda dello stadio di Norimberga, in Germania, che ha ospitato le adunate generali del regime Nazista, sospeso tra le esigenze di conservazione e tutela di un edificio con una forte carica storica e l'impossibilità oggettiva di spendervi soldi pubblici o privati per restaurarlo: chiunque lo abbia visitato, ne avrà tratta l'amara sensazione che si attenda con fiducia che cada da solo.

Diverso l'atteggiamento con alcune opere in Italia, si pensi al complesso dell'EUR o del Foro Italico a Roma: in più di un'occasione si è detto che andrebbe cancellato il nome di Mussolini dall'obelisco al centro del complesso sportivo, ma ci si è ben guardati dal farlo. Ma poi cosa cambierebbe? La cancellazione del nome di chi volle quel monumento, cancellerebbe forse quel periodo? E non si rischierebbe, al contrario, di rimuovere dalla coscienza collettiva la materialità storica del Fascismo, relegandone i monumenti e le opere a puri elementi di arredo urbano? Alla base vi è l'incapacità di affrontare con la serenità della storicizzazione, un periodo che divise l'Italia e di cui, non a torto, ancora ci vergogniamo.

Mi si dirà che evidentemente, come nel caso delle statue degli schiavisti, quel passato ha ancora profonde radici anche nel presente, che esistono ancora persone la cui esistenza è stata ed è toccata dalle conseguenze delle azioni delle persone ritratte e celebrate da quei monumenti.

Ma se l'elemento che deve guidarci nel decidere se conservare o meno un bene, se considerarlo Heritage, è la sua storicizzazione, un'atarassia collettiva nel leggerlo, allora qual è il tempo che deve passare per poter storicizzare un avvenimento? Chi lo decide?

Se ancora oggi migliaia di ebrei piangono tutti i giorni al Muro del Pianto di Gerusalemme, ricordando la distruzione del Tempio in epoca romana, nel caso la Comunità ebraica lo

chiedesse, sarebbe giusto, per lo stesso principio, abbattere l'Arco di Tito al Foro Romano o almeno coprirne i rilievi che celebrano la vittoria dell'Imperatore e la depredazione del Tempio di Gerusalemme?



Figure 2. Roman Triumphal arch panel copy from Beth Hatefutsoth, showing spoils of Jerusalem temple (photo by Steerpik @ wikipedia)

Ma poi non siamo proprio noi archeologi imbevuti di posizioni processualiste e post-processualiste, a sostenere che il male peggiore per l'archeologia sia scegliere cosa salvare e cosa no? Cosa considerare importante e cosa ignorare?

E quando la rimozione o il tentativo di rimuovere simboli e monumenti, colpisce simboli a cui noi diamo un valore opposto, come è successo recentemente con la nota mozione del Parlamento Europeo che ha tentato di equiparare i crimini di comunismo e nazismo e di condannare l'uso dei simboli comunisti, noi come ci collochiamo?



Figure 3. Columbus monument, Barcelona (photo by From Maremagnum to inland (CC BY-SA 3.0 <https://commons.wikimedia.org/w/index.php?curid=481861>))

E in alcuni casi il problema non tocca nemmeno avvenimenti così vicini a noi, si pensi all'intenso dibattito intorno ai monumenti dedicati a Cristoforo Colombo in molti paesi americani: mentre in Europa Genova e Barcellona si contendono l'essere stati la patria dello "scopritore" delle Americhe (altro punto di vista eurocentrico quello della scoperta delle terre, della definizione di occidente e oriente. Vabbè, un altro post), nel continente americano i movimenti antirazzisti e quelli per i diritti dei nativi, chiedono che le statue del navigatore, considerato il simbolo delle stragi compiute in nome della colonizzazione e della tratta degli schiavi, vengano ovunque abbattute e si smetta di festeggiare la ricorrenza del 12 ottobre del 1492.

Al contrario, a proposito di storicizzazione, uno degli atti del nuovo stato unitario italiano, una volta conquistata Roma al Papa, fu l'erezione nel 1889 a Campo de'

Fiori della statua che commemora il rogo di Giordano Bruno nel 1600: nel 1929, durante le trattative che portarono alla firma dei patti lateranensi, il Papa Pio XI chiese la rimozione della statua e solo la paura di disordini come quelli che si erano verificati 40 anni prima portò Mussolini a rifiutare. In compenso vietò che si svolgessero commemorazioni del filosofo presso di essa.

L'ho già detto precedentemente, ma forse vale la pena di dirlo di nuovo: la rimozione dei simboli scomodi o inaccettabili, nei luoghi che sono stati edificati anche grazie ai protagonisti celebrati da quei simboli, non rischia di ripulire la coscienza di quei luoghi senza spiegarne la genesi e l'origine?

Mi spiego meglio: oggi i Docks di Londra sono uno dei miei posti preferiti per prendermi un aperitivo se mi trovo in quella città, sono gentrificati al punto giusto da diventare meta di curiosità e svago per turisti e borghesi in libera uscita; ma quei luoghi sono stati edificati sul sangue di decine migliaia di schiavi prima e di lavoratori poi, che col loro sudore hanno reso ricche le compagnie di navigazione e di commercio che lì avevano sede. È meglio cancellare le tracce del passato abbattendo quelle statue, o spiegare il contesto storico in cui furono erette e il dolore che quei personaggi provocarono? Quando nel 2007 l'Italia scelse di restituire all'Etiopia l'obelisco di Axum, che era stato collocato dopo le guerre coloniali italiane degli anni '30 del Novecento a Piazza Capena a Roma, si sviluppò un

dibattito sull'opportunità di questa operazione: le posizioni erano divise tra chi sosteneva che fosse giusto farlo, in segno di riconciliazione con un paese che era stato invaso e colonizzato brutalmente dall'Italia, e chi diceva che ormai quelle vicende erano passate e che non aveva più senso restituire quel monumento.



Figure 4. Disassembling the Obelisk of Axum in Rome, 20 October 2003 (photo credits: indeciso42 - CC BY 4.0 <https://it.wikipedia.org/w/index.php?curid=7285993>)

Io mi faccio un'altra domanda: chi sa oggi delle guerre coloniali italiane, del dolore che portarono, dei morti che fecero? La restituzione dell'obelisco, mi sembra, potrà anche aver migliorato i nostri rapporti diplomatici con l'Etiopia, ma ha anche effettuato una sorta di lavaggio della coscienza degli italiani, che con quel gesto si sentono ormai a posto e nel diritto di ignorare ciò che è avvenuto.

Dovevamo tenere l'obelisco? Probabilmente no, ma ho la sensazione che la sua restituzione non abbia avuto un effetto necessariamente positivo sulla nostra consapevolezza collettiva, perché al *beau geste* non è stata affiancata una operazione di educazione continua a quel periodo e di ricordo di ciò che è stato.

Ma dunque esiste un diritto della collettività a scegliere volta per volta ciò che è o non è degno di essere definito Heritage? Non credo che si possa esprimere un'opinione su questo, è un fatto talmente naturale che ciò avvenga, che non si può prendere una posizione a favore o contro; ma questo diritto naturale non è esattamente ciò che ha fatto nascere l'esigenza delle leggi di tutela?

Non è per salvare ciò che un gruppo ridotto di persone, chiamiamola elite, riteneva valesse la pena di essere salvato, che abbiamo scritto le norme di tutela e conservazione dei Beni Culturali, gli accordi internazionali e così via? Allora il cambiamento nella valutazione dell'interesse culturale di un bene, si deve a un cambiamento di umore o di atteggiamento all'interno di quella elite, o a un cambiamento più ampio della coscienza collettiva (ammesso che questa categoria esista e abbia un senso)? Credo che sia nostro compito (nostro inteso proprio come quella elite che della tutela si occupa) analizzare questo aspetto con grande attenzione e onestà, prima di accettare come dato di fatto il puro diritto di un gruppo più o meno autoproclamatosi collettività di distruggere o modificare un bene culturale, anche quando quel gruppo rappresenti in buona parte le nostre idee, come in questo caso.

Durante la rivolta dei gilet gialli in Francia, l'assalto ai monumenti di Parigi è avvenuto in nome della distruzione dei simboli dell'imperialismo francese.

Qualcuno di noi può forse negare che l'Arco di Trionfo sia il simbolo dell'imperialismo della Francia Napoleonica?

Qualcuno di noi è disposto ad accettare che quel simbolo di Parigi e dell'occidente sia distrutto in nome della cancellazione del passato imperiale?

Ognuno risponda come sente, basta che lo si faccia in maniera onesta e non solo *pour épater le bourgeois*.

English Translation

I'm writing this piece straight off, while in America and across the world riots are spreading following the death of George Perry Floyd, an African American man who died suffocated in Minneapolis after being brutally arrested and held on the ground by a policeman kneeling on his neck for the longest 9 minutes, for having paid a pack of cigarettes with a fake 20 dollar bill.

The wave of protest, which brought thousands of people across the United States to the streets, with violent clashes and even some casualties, quickly spread throughout the western world: the theme of police violence and racism against African American communities have perhaps irreversibly shaken public opinion, especially the part that has been fighting for years for a change that is hard to see.

In this small piece, I will not deal with the central question of this debate, being certain that I can only say obvious and banal things, but with my particular position on a related phenomenon, that of the removal, especially in Europe, of statues and symbols related to mythologized and heroic representation of people who have enriched themselves with the African slave trade.

It happens in these days in Bristol, for example, that a large group of anti-racist militants, after having long asked the Municipality to remove the statue of a slavist, whose name is not worth mentioning, who made his fortune carrying something like 100,000 slaves from Africa to America, decided, partly on the wave of global mobilization for the death of Floyd George, to remove the statue and throw it into the water. A definitive act of rupture, which the city of Bristol could have long avoided in many ways, by moving the statue or placing a plaque commemorating the victims, for example, as the militants asked for a long time.

In these same days the Museum of London, entrusts to its Facebook page, a post in which it announces that it has undertaken the procedures for the removal of a statue of another slave driver, located near the London Docks headquarters of the museum, and other elements present in the area, which recall the colonial and slaver past of the companies that had their headquarters there.

It is important to underline that both the Museum of London and that of Bristol have dedicated an important part of their exhibition to the story of the historical events related to the slave trade and the colonization of the New World.

So, everything is well. But yet. Yet I have some doubts, evidently not on the good, indeed very good intentions of the authors of the Bristol gesture and the Chiefs of the Museum of London.

By discussing with other colleagues and reading the reactions of other people involved in Cultural Heritage, I was able to see that the positions are quite diverse.

Those who defend the position of the removal of these symbols, argue, not without valid reasons, that what makes an asset to be eligible to be called Heritage is depends on the context: an object, a statue, a monument, can be considered in a historical moment as elements to be protected, representing that time or its legacy, and can then become elements to be erased, forgotten, in a different period: it happened and still happens with the monuments of totalitarian and dictatorial regimes, just think of the scenes recently passed even on television of the demolition of the statues of the old communist patriarchs

in Eastern Europe, or the statues of Saddam Hussein in Irak, but also in the remote past, the practice of abrasion from a monument of the name of an emperor disgraced or the destruction of his effigy (also touched the Colossus of Nero).

But in these cases the material and temporal closeness of people with the facts and persons that those statues had erected and represent, gives them a sacrosanct right to choose what to do with those symbols, also and above all to destroy them. Instead, I ask myself the question of whether this behavior makes sense many years after those events, when the historicization of those events and objects transforms them, their ideological charge diminishes, with the painful and alive memories moving away in the minds of survivors. And in fact, all throughout Europe, the monuments of Fascism and Nazism, which for various reasons were not destroyed by war or immediately afterwards, have been preserved, albeit with different attitudes.

Think of the story of the stadium in Nuremberg, Germany, which hosted the general gatherings of the Nazi regime, suspended between the needs of conservation and protection of a building with a strong historical charge and the objective impossibility of spending public or private money on it to restore it: anyone who has visited it, will have taken the bitter feeling that it is expected with confidence that it will fall by itself.

A different attitude has been used with some monuments in Italy, think of the EUR or Foro Italico complex in Rome: on more than one occasion it has been requested that Mussolini's name should be deleted from the obelisk at the center of the sports complex, but this operation has never been accomplished.

But then what would change? Would the deletion of the name of those who wanted that monument erase that period? And wouldn't we risk, on the contrary, removing the historical materiality of Fascism from the collective conscience, to relegate its monuments and works to pure elements of urban furniture? At the base there is the inability to deal, with the serenity of historicization, with a period that divided Italy and of which, not wrongly, we are still ashamed.

I will be told that evidently, as in the case of the slaver statues, those stories still have deep roots even in the present, that there are people whose existence has been and still is touched by the consequences of the actions of the people portrayed and celebrated by those monuments.

But if the element that must guide us in deciding whether or not to preserve an asset, whether to consider it Heritage, it is its historicization, a collective ataraxia in reading it, then how long should we wait in order to historicize an event? Who decides it?

If thousands of Jews still cry every day at the Wailing Wall in Jerusalem, remembering the destruction of the Temple in Roman times, if now the Jewish community asked for it, it would be right, by the same principle, to knock down the Arch of Titus in the Roman Forum or at least cover the reliefs that celebrate the victory of the Emperor and the depredation of the Temple of Jerusalem?

And more, aren't we archaeologists imbued with processualist and post-processualist positions, to argue that the worst evil for archeology is choosing what to save and what not? What to consider important and what to ignore?

And when the removal or attempt to remove symbols and monuments, affects symbols to which we give an opposite value, as happened recently with the well-known motion of

the European Parliament which attempted to equate the crimes of Communism and Nazism and to condemn the use of communist symbols, how do we place ourselves?

In some cases the problem does not even touch events so close to us, think of the intense debate around the monuments dedicated to Christopher Columbus in many american countries: while in Europe Genoa and Barcelona compete for having been the home of the "discoverer" of the Americas (another Eurocentric point of view that of the discovery of the lands, like the definition of west and east. Oh well, another post), in the american continent the anti-racist movement and those for the rights of the natives, ask that all the statues of the navigator, considered the symbol of the massacres carried out in the name of colonization and the slave trade, are knocked down everywhere and that we stop celebrating the anniversary of 12 October 1492.

On the contrary, speaking of historicization, one of the acts of the new Italian unitary state, once Rome was conquered to the Pope, was the erection in Campo de' Fiori in 1889 of the statue commemorating the burning of Giordano Bruno in 1600: in 1929, during the negotiations that led to the signing of the Lateran pacts, Pope Pius XI asked for the removal of the statue and only the fear of disorders such as those that had occurred 40 years earlier led Mussolini to refuse. On the other hand, he forbade commemorations of the philosopher from taking place there.

I have already said it previously, but perhaps it is worth saying it again: the removal of uncomfortable or unacceptable symbols, in the places that were built thanks to the protagonists celebrated by those symbols, does not risk cleaning up the consciousness of those places without explain their genesis and origin?

Let me explain: today the Docks in London are one of my favorite places to have an aperitif if I am in that city, they are gentrified at the right point to become a destination of curiosity and entertainment for tourists and bourgeois in free exit; but those places were built on the blood of tens of thousands of slaves first and then workers, who with their sweat made the shipping and trade companies that were based there rich. Is it better to erase the traces of the past by knocking down those statues, or to explain the historical context in which they were erected and the pain that those characters caused? When in 2007 Italy chose to return the Axum obelisk to Ethiopia, which had been placed after the Italian colonial wars of the 1930s in Piazza Capena in Rome, a debate developed on the appropriateness of this operation: positions were divided between those who argued that it was right to do so, as a sign of reconciliation with a country that had been brutally invaded and colonized by Italy, and those who said that those events had now passed and that it no longer made sense to return that monument.

I ask myself another question: who knows today about the Italian colonial wars, the pain they brought, the dead they did? The restitution of the obelisk, it seems to me, may also have improved our diplomatic relations with Ethiopia, but it has also carried out a sort of washing of the conscience of the Italians, who with that gesture now feel right and in the right to ignore what happened. Should we keep the obelisk? Probably not, but I have the feeling that its return had not necessarily a positive effect on our collective awareness, because the beau geste was not accompanied by an operation of continuous education on that period and of what happened.

But then there is a right of the community to choose from time to time what is or is not worthy of being called Heritage? I don't think you can express an opinion on this, it is

such a natural fact that this happens, that you cannot take a position for or against it; but isn't this natural right exactly what gave rise to the need for protection laws? Isn't it to save what a small group of people, let's call it an elite, believed it was worth saving, that we wrote the rules for the protection and conservation of Cultural Heritage, international agreements and so on? So, the change in the evaluation of the cultural interest of an asset is due to a change of mood or attitude within that elite, or to a wider change of collective consciousness (assuming that this category exists and makes sense)? I believe it is our duty (meaning with "our" just that elite that deals with protection) to analyze this aspect with great attention and honesty, before accepting as a fact the pure right of a group more or less self-proclaimed community to destroy or modify a cultural asset, even when that group largely represents our ideas, as in this case.

During the revolt of the yellow vests in France, the assault on the monuments of Paris occurred in the name of the destruction of the symbols of French imperialism.

Can any of us deny that the Arc de Triomphe is the symbol of imperialism in Napoleonic France?

Are any of us willing to accept that that symbol of Paris and the West is destroyed in the name of erasing the imperial past?

Respond as you feel, as long as you do it honestly and not just *pour épater le bourgeois*.

Di tutela, immondizia e nomadismo. Riflessioni a margine di una sorveglianza archeologica in corso d'opera.

Of Protection, Rubbish, and Nomadism. Reflections from the Periphery of an Ongoing Rescue Excavation.¹

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Alla fine di novembre del 2020 si dava inizio ad una sorveglianza archeologica in corso d'opera nel quartiere Collatino a Roma (Italia), in un terreno tra via Grotta di Gregna e via Collatina. Si effettuavano scavi di controllo in corrispondenza di ciascuno dei 14 punti in cui veniva realizzato un sondaggio di monitoraggio dello stato d'inquinamento del terreno causato dalla perdita del serbatoio di un punto vendita di carburante. Non saranno i dettagli tecnici o i risultati scaturiti dagli scavi archeologici ad essere oggetto di queste righe, ma le riflessioni scaturite da un evento accaduto nel corso della loro realizzazione. Tra la vegetazione di quest'area rimasta verde, riparate alla vista si nascondevano poche baracche di un piccolo insediamento spontaneo di Rom, vicini silenziosi del nostro lavoro con cui non avevamo tuttavia nessun contatto. Un 'insediamento informale', non gestito dalle istituzioni comunali, costituito da abitazioni autocostruite, prive di servizi e con condizioni igienico-sanitarie presumibilmente critiche. Tutte le fotografie sono state scattate dall'autrice.



Figure 1. Sbaraccamenti – Clearing out the shacks from the Roma camp

¹ English version below.

Quando lo scavo è ripreso, dopo un mese di sospensione coincisa con la pausa natalizia, le baracche erano state rase al suolo e del piccolo accampamento non restavano che cumuli di resti.



Figure 2. Cumulo con monumento – Pile with a monument

Ammassi di pannelli di legno, mobili spaccati, pentolame, vestiti, scarpe, tantissimi giocattoli, pannolini e altri oggetti legati alla presenza di bambini.



Figure 3. Dimmi dove sei ora – Tell me where you are now

Un cumulo per ogni baracca. L'ordine nella distruzione. Silenzio e abbandono, dove fino a qualche giorno prima c'era stata vita.



Figure 4. Tacco 8 – 3 inch heel

Facile immaginare cosa fosse successo, pur non avendovi assistito: forze dell'ordine, qualche esponente delle autorità, confusione e parapiglia mentre gli sfollati prendono qualcosa da portare via, le ruspe in azione nella demolizione delle baracche.



Figure 5. La scarpetta perduta – The lost tiny shoe

Non una novità per questo luogo: in otto anni, questo era per lo meno il terzo sgombero forzato, come si può ricostruire dalle informazioni reperibili sul web, dove la notizia è data con le consuete parole chiave: sgombero, ambiente, degrado, insediamento abusivo, baraccopoli, bonifica, lotta all'illegalità. Ma per ragioni e legami con i luoghi che non è sempre dato ricostruire, i gruppi umani tornano spesso ad insediarsi negli stessi posti anche dopo eventi catastrofici come questo, con le stesse modalità e tenacia.



Figure 6. Guess what?

Io come archeologa, insieme al geologo e agli operai, ci siamo così ritrovati ad essere involontari testimoni di un evento di cui abbiamo potuto osservare solo l'esito. Più precisamente, abbiamo vissuto il momento di transizione intercorso tra la demolizione e la trasformazione delle baracche in ammassi di immondizie e la loro successiva rimozione con le ruspe nell'area infine 'bonificata'.



Figure 7. Ridi, pagliaccio – Laugh, clown

Accantonando ogni giudizio sulle circostanze e le motivazioni di quanto avvenuto, impossibile per noi spettatori non provare di fronte a quei resti emozioni come turbamento, senso di impotenza, tristezza. Difficile non chiedersi dove sia il bambino che prima correva con quella scarpa rossa o non provare a immaginare per quale occasione una giovane donna abbia calzato quel tacco vertiginoso ora spaiato.



Figure 8. The day after

L'archeologia è la disciplina umanistica che mira a ricostruire comunità antiche attraverso lo studio delle testimonianze materiali, delle fonti storiche e iconografiche. L'osservazione costante e metodica delle tracce è uno degli aspetti che la rende una scienza attuale, perché per immaginare come si vivesse in altre epoche e in differenti contesti si deve fare uno sforzo di immedesimazione e, come in un gioco di specchi, trovando similarità, identificandosi o distanziandosi dall'uomo del passato, l'uomo del presente inevitabilmente definisce e comprende meglio se stesso.



Figure 9. La pantofola della nonna – Grannie's slipper

In maniera speculare, se guardati con gli stessi occhi e con la curiosità archeologico-antropologica con cui studiamo e interroghiamo i manufatti e le tracce antiche, quei cumuli temporanei di 'immondizia' contemporanea in cui era stato ridotto il campo nomadi al Collatino non potevano rappresentare un caso di studio e un esercizio metodologico di comparazione per le indagini sull'antico dalle potenzialità immense? Quanti fossili guida avremmo potuto individuare tra le immondizie? Se per esempio avessimo raccolto e catalogato anche solo le scarpe, con la maniacalità feticistica – è il caso di dire- con cui cataloghiamo e studiamo classi di manufatti antichi, non avremmo potuto ricavare informazioni sul numero, il genere, l'età, le abitudini, il lavoro, il tempo libero degli abitanti dell'insediamento e molto altro ancora?



Figure 10. Father and son

Nell'ambito di uno scavo archeologico, trovandoci di fronte a cumuli di materiali formati da processi simili a quelli che hanno prodotto i nostri mucchi di immondizia, sapremmo ricostruire non solo la planimetria delle baracche ma aspetti quali il concetto di casa per chi le abitava, come si vivesse lo spazio interno e quello esterno, le abitudini alimentari, le attività lavorative, economiche e di scambio, le pratiche culturali, la natura del legame del gruppo umano che aveva scelto di stanziarsi in quel luogo e le motivazioni alla base di quella scelta, se volontaria o in quale misura indotta da altri gruppi umani?



Figure 11. La moka, o dell'italianità acquisita – Moka coffee machine, or that sense of becoming Italian

Osservando i resti di insediamenti di comunità definibili come nomadi o seminomadi, quelli del campo al Collatino al pari di quelli di un ipotetico scavo archeologico, saremmo capaci di distinguere quali degli oggetti superstiti siano destinati all'uso degli abitanti e quali siano invece quelli acquisiti e accumulati per attività di tipo economico come rilavorazione, scambio o vendita? Penso alle moderne e, per vari motivi, criticate

modalità di raccolta che prevedono il rovistare nei cassonetti, non solo o non necessariamente connesse a fenomeni di povertà ma talvolta a stili di vita, il cui esito è di fatto molto più rispondente ai principi dell'economia circolare di molti altri tipi di attività economico produttive comunemente accettate. Parleremmo di assimilazione del gruppo nomade alla cultura 'ospitante' se trovassimo nelle abitazioni dei primi oggetti tipicamente riferibili alla cultura materiale della seconda, come la moka, uno dei simboli di italianità per eccellenza, e a poca distanza da questa, di un oggetto per lo stesso uso ma di provenienza diversa, come la macchina da caffè del brand straniero Nespresso?



Figure 12. What else?

Questi e una miriade di altri pensieri, riflessioni e considerazioni hanno attraversato le nostre menti nei pochi giorni in cui abbiamo avuto davanti agli occhi i mucchi delle baracche distrutte e ancora in quelli successivi alla loro rimozione, quando sul terreno rimanevano 'i resti dei resti' sfuggiti al passaggio finale delle pale dei bobcat. Pensieri a cavallo tra archeologia, antropologia, sociologia, perfino politica, confacenti comunque all'osservazione tanto del passato quanto del presente. Dal significato di identità, alla permeabilità e al reciproco rapporto tra le culture, alla dominanza di alcune su altre, alla possibilità o meno di coesistenza di gruppi nomadi e stanziali, al significato della multiculturalità, ai pregiudizi etnocentrici, al binomio integrazione esclusione, all'esistenza all'interno degli stati di confini invisibili dove il diverso è relegato o si autorelega per sopravvivere.

La temporaneità degli accumuli e la natura dell'intervento archeologico in corso non hanno purtroppo consentito di approfittare delle potenzialità del contesto per

un'indagine mirata e sistematica, come ad esempio quella del progetto di studio del Parco dei Caduti di S. Lorenzo di Roma (Maini et al. 2007). Avremmo potuto approfondire osservazioni rimaste allo stato superficiale, provare a sistematizzarle in modelli o confrontarli con quanto registrato da altri in situazioni comparabili. Verificare, ad esempio, se anche in prossimità del campo al Collatino fossero presenti scarichi di rifiuti in modalità simili a quelle osservate in altre aree di stazionamento dei Rom, e in quei casi interpretate come demarcazione degli spazi e limite sociale identitario nei confronti dell'esterno (Hodder 1982).



Figure 13. Il mondo di sotto – The world underneath

Ho trovato difficoltà a dare un significato alla mia presenza in quel contesto e in quella precisa circostanza. Con la sorveglianza archeologica dovevo scongiurare la compromissione di eventuali resti antichi, ma raggiungere con lo scavo la quota del livello geologico per verificarne la presenza o meno è stato per lo più impossibile, perché nascosta sotto al manto erboso c'è un'enorme discarica abusiva profonda diversi metri, contenente rifiuti di ogni genere, per lo più riconducibili a scarti di cantieri, demolizioni e ristrutturazioni edilizie, che avrebbero dovuto essere conferiti in luoghi appositamente adibiti. Altra immondizia, di diversa natura, ma potenziale soggetto di ulteriori molteplici considerazioni. Sopra terra, in quelle piccole colline di avanzi che un tempo erano state baracche, c'era il record fisico di un mondo privato, sottoterra milioni di frammenti che, se presi singolarmente rivelano poco, ma nel complesso riflettono diversi aspetti delle attività di una comunità organizzata e del suo livello di civilizzazione.

In questo scavo dei paradossi, mentre da una parte, per monitorare la diffusione dell'inquinamento del terreno provocato dagli idrocarburi, si affondava la ruspa nell'immondo illegalmente nascosto, scarto ed effetto collaterale delle attività della nostra società, dall'altra si faceva pulizia in superficie sbaraccando un accampamento di nomadi non autorizzato e ripristinando decoro e legalità. Luci e ombre di un sopra e un sottoterra, metafora del contrasto tra l'apparenza di ciò che è visibile e la realtà di ciò che si sceglie di nascondere.



Figure 14. Al di là delle apparenze – Beyond appearances

L'esperienza più interessante di quella sorveglianza è stata, senza dubbio, la vastità delle riflessioni suscitate dalla visione degli scarti, segni affascinanti e inequivocabili della presenza umana. Nulla di non già detto: nasce negli anni Settanta l'etnoarcheologia, come comprensione del contesto archeologico del passato mediante l'osservazione del presente (Schiffer 1972), poi evolutasi in specifica strategia di ricerca. Negli stessi anni nasce anche la 'garbology' come scienza (Rathje & Murphy 1992)² la quale, nel nostro fare i conti con il senso di impermanenza dell'uomo, ci restituisce una certezza: che l'immondizia e gli artefatti hanno una durata temporale molto maggiore degli esseri umani che li producono, un potere informativo millenario. Tracce di umanità e talvolta di disumanità.

² Principio di un filone evoluto in molteplici direzioni anche, inevitabilmente, di taglio ambientale. Si veda per esempio www.archeoplastica.it

English version

In late November 2020, an archaeological watching brief commenced in the Collatino neighbourhood of Rome, Italy, more precisely in the area is situated between Grotta di Gregna and Collatina streets. A total of 14 test pits were excavated before the geologists started drilling a series of boreholes, to assess the soil contamination previously caused by a fuel tank leak.

This essay does not focus on the technical details or outcomes of the archaeological excavations. Instead, it delves into reflections spurred by an incident during their execution. Amidst the verdant vegetation shielding them from view, a few slums from a small spontaneous Roma settlement stood silent adjacent to our work. This unofficial settlement, not managed by the municipal administration, comprised poorly built shacks lacking services and likely facing critical sanitary conditions. All photographs were taken by the author.

When the excavation resumed, after a month's suspension coinciding with the Christmas break, the shacks had been demolished to the ground leaving only mounds of debris from the former small camp (fig. 1).

Piles of wooden panels, broken furniture, pots and pans, clothes, shoes, hundreds of toys, diapers and other objects related to the presence of children (fig. 2).

A pile of debris each shack. Order in destruction. Silence and abandonment, where until a few days before there had been life (fig. 3).

It's easy to envision what unfolded, despite not witnessing it firsthand: the presence of police forces and members of the authorities amidst the chaos, evacuees hurriedly salvaging belongings, while bulldozers relentlessly razed the shacks (fig. 4).

Nothing new for this place: in the span of eight years, it's endured at least three forced evictions, as pieced together from available web sources. The news typically frames it with recurring terms like eviction, environmental degradation, squatter settlements, slums, reclamation and the fight against illegality. But for not always clear reasons and links to specific locations, human communities often return to settle in the same areas even after events as catastrophic as this one, with the same tenacity and methods (fig. 5).

I as an archaeologist, alongside the geologist and our team of workers, thus found ourselves involuntary witnessing an event of which we could only observe the outcome. Specifically, we were present during the transition from the demolition of the shacks, which turned into mounds of debris, to their subsequent removal by bulldozers in the newly 'reclaimed' area.

Setting aside any judgment regarding the circumstances and motivations behind what occurred, as spectators, it was impossible not to be stirred by emotions like shock, a profound sense of helplessness, and sadness when faced with these remnants. It was difficult not to try to envision for what occasion a young woman has worn that now mismatched vertiginous beel" (fig. 6).

Archaeology is the humanistic discipline that aims to reconstruct ancient communities through the study of material evidence, historical and iconographic sources. The constant and methodical observation of traces is one of the aspects that makes it a current science, because in order to imagine how people lived in other eras and in different contexts, one must make an effort to identify oneself and, as in a mirror, finding similarities, identifying or distancing oneself from the man of the past, the present man inevitably defines and understands himself better (fig. 7-8).

Likewise, when observed through the same archaeological-anthropological approach applied to ancient artifacts and remnants, could the temporary mounds of contemporary 'rubbish' left from the Collatino nomadic camp demolition not serve as a valuable case study and methodological experiment for comparing investigations into antiquity? Might these piles not conceal a treasure trove of index fossils? If, for example, we had collected and cataloged even just shoes, with the fetishistic mania - it is appropriate to say it - that we apply in cataloguing and studying classes of ancient artefacts, wouldn't we have been able to obtain information on the number, sex, age, habits, work, free time and leisure activities of the inhabitants of the settlement and much more (fig. 9)?

Within an archaeological excavation, facing accumulations of materials resembling in their formation processes the mounds of debris described here, could we unravel more than just the structural layout of the shacks? Could we delve into aspects like the notion of 'home' perceived by its inhabitants, understanding their domestic and communal spaces, dietary patterns, work dynamics, economic transactions, cult practices, the intricate connections within the settling community, and the underlying motivations behind their choice to settle there - whether driven by their own volition or influenced by external factors (fig. 10)?

When examining the remnants of settlements belonging to nomadic or semi-nomadic communities like the ones of the Collatino camp or those discovered in a theoretical archaeological dig, would we be able to differentiate between items intended for the inhabitants' personal use and those gathered for economic purposes like reworking, trading, or selling? I'm thinking of modern collection methods, often criticized for involving bin scavenging, practices not always associated solely with poverty but sometimes reflecting certain lifestyles, often align more closely with the principles of the circular economy than many conventional economic activities. If we discovered within the dwellings of a nomadic group objects that mirror the material culture of the 'host' society - like the quintessentially Italian moka coffee machine - alongside items from different origins, say, a machine of the foreign brand Nespresso, would this signify an assimilation of the nomadic group into the cultural norms of the hosting community (fig. 11-12)?

In those few days when the piles of demolished shacks loomed before us and even after their removal, in front of 'the remains of the remains' that had escaped the final passage of the bobcat shovels, thoughts and reflections flooded our minds. These musings ranged across diverse disciplines like archaeology, anthropology, sociology, and even politics, each offering insights into the past and the present. We pondered over topics ranging from the intricate meanings of identity to the interplay and permeability between cultures, from the power dynamics among different groups to the potential coexistence of nomadic and settled communities. We delved into discussions about multiculturalism, ethnocentric biases, integration, exclusion, and the existence of invisible borders within states where differences are marginalized or self-imposed for survival (fig. 13).

Unfortunately, the transient nature of these accumulations and the ongoing archaeological work limited our ability to exploit this context fully for a precise and systematic investigation, akin to the comprehensive study carried out at the Parco dei Caduti di S. Lorenzo in Rome (Maini et al. 2007). There was an opportunity to delve deeper into our observations, to organize them into structured models, or to compare them with similar situations recorded elsewhere (fig. 13). For instance, we could have examined whether waste dumps near the Collatino camp mirrored patterns seen in other Roma settlements, where such dumps signify spatial demarcations and social identity boundaries (Hodder 1982).

It was challenging for me to find purpose in my presence within that specific context. In the emergency excavation, my primary task was to safeguard any ancient remnants from harm. However, determining the existence of these remnants below the geological layer was mostly impossible. Buried beneath the soil lay an extensive illegal dump, several meters deep, comprising a wide array of waste, primarily stemming from construction, demolition, and renovation projects—materials that should have been properly disposed of in designated areas. There were also other types of refuse, each holding potential for various interpretations.

Above ground, in those small hills formed from the remnants of once-standing shacks, there was the physical evidence of a private world. Underground, however, millions of fragments that, when taken individually, reveal little, but on the whole reflect different aspects of the activities of an organized community and its level of sophistication (fig. 14).

In this excavation marked by paradoxes, the bulldozer, employed to monitor soil pollution caused by hydrocarbons, delved into the concealed filth—a manifestation of our society's discarded waste and unintended consequences. Simultaneously, efforts were made on the surface to clear an unauthorized nomadic settlement, reinstating order and legality. These contrasts between light and shadow, visible and concealed, epitomized the dichotomy between surface appearances and the reality deliberately obscured from view.

The most remarkable experience brought forth by this archaeological surveillance was the vastness of considerations sparked by the sight of discarded items—captivating and unmistakable markers of human existence. As the saying goes, “there's nothing new under the sun”: the 1970s witnessed the dawn of ethnoarchaeology, a means of comprehending the past's archaeological context through observations of the present (Schiffer 1972). This approach later evolved into a distinct research strategy. Simultaneously, those years saw the emergence of 'garbology' as a scientific discipline (Rathje & Murphy 1992), offering us a certainty, in our dealing with the sense of impermanence of man: waste and artifacts endure far beyond the lifespans of those who create them, possessing an informational power spanning millennia. Traces of both humanity and, at times, inhumanity.

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Archaeology and Comics¹

Emiliano Barletta & Alessio Lo Manto

DOI: 10.32028/exnovo-vol-7-pp.95-107

Quando parliamo di fumetti, spesso si pensa ad un prodotto per un pubblico di giovanissimi; infatti, nell'editoria non specializzata il paradigma fumetti/bambini è ancora dominante. E' altrettanto vero che negli ultimi decenni il fumetto - nella sua declinazione di graphic journalism- è entrato di diritto tra i mezzi di informazione e divulgazione scientifica a nostra disposizione. Grazie alla combinazione unica di immagini, disegni, voci narranti e dialoghi, il tradizionale comic book è passato dall'essere semplice storia di fantasia a reportage illustrato.

Nelle tavole che seguono, Emiliano Barletta e Alessio Lo Manto ci introducono alle potenzialità del linguaggio dei comic books per fare divulgazione scientifica in archeologia, rivolgendosi ad un pubblico adulto di non addetti ai lavori. Come può questo mezzo di espressione trasformare la percezione della nostra disciplina e la disciplina stessa? Può renderla più inclusiva e quindi più socialmente rilevante? I lettori di Ex Novo probabilmente possono immaginare la nostra risposta... buona lettura!

Bios

Emiliano Barletta è un archeologo, informatico e fumettista romano. Si è laureato in archeologia del Vicino Oriente Antico alla Sapienza Università di Roma e ha studiato sceneggiatura presso la Scuola di Fumetto Online di ComicOut. Da archeologo ha collaborato con diverse missioni archeologiche in Italia e all'estero (Siria e Turchia). Come sceneggiatore ha pubblicato la biografia a fumetti "Charlie Chaplin. Il funambolo" (NPE, 2019), il Graphic Novel "Diario di Scavo. Considerazioni finali" (Oblò-APS, 2021). Il suo lavoro di divulgazione storico-archeologica è proseguito con alcune "cartoline" pubblicate sul settimanale "Internazionale" e diversi fumetti brevi per la "Confederazione Italiana Archeologi". Ha inoltre partecipato alle antologie a fumetti "My Covid in comics"(Caracò Editore, 2021) e "Combatti la paura" (Edizioni il Galeone, 2018). Ha collaborato con la rivista "Scuola di Fumetto", il trimestrale

¹ Article published online as a blog entry on the Ex Novo-website in July 2018 (you can find [here](#) the link to the webpage).

“ANTIFAInzine” e i portali di Graphic Journalism STORMI ([BeccoGiallo](#)) e [GraphicNews](#).

Nell'estate del 2012, ventenne, **Alessio Lo Manto** scopre il mondo del fumetto e del graphic journalism leggendo Joe Sacco all'Educational Book Shop di Gerusalemme. Una serie di circostanze lo portano più tardi ad iscriversi a Grafite – Scuola di grafica e fumetto, a Bari, ma non prima di aver conseguito una laurea in Scienze Politiche e vissuto qualche anno di esperienze da volontario all'estero. Vive in simbiosi col suo cappellino. Ha collaborato con i siti di Graphic Journalism STORMI ([BeccoGiallo](#)) e [GraphicNews](#).

English Translation

When considering comics, our initial association tends to be with content tailored for a younger audience. Indeed, within the general publishing industry, the predominant perception aligns comics with a children-oriented paradigm. Nevertheless, over recent decades, comics, particularly in the guise of graphic journalism, have rightfully earned their place as a tool for disseminating information and scientific knowledge. Through a unique fusion of images, artwork, narrative voices, and dialogues, the conventional comic book has transcended mere fantasy storytelling, evolving into a sophisticated form of illustrated reportage.

In the forthcoming pages, Emiliano Barletta and Alessio Lo Manto illuminate the vast potential inherent in the language of comic books for communicating scientific archaeology to an adult audience beyond the professional sphere. How might this expressive medium reshape both the perception and substance of our discipline? Can it foster a more inclusive and thus socially relevant dimension within archaeology? Perhaps, as readers of *Ex Novo* delve into these pages, they will sense our shared viewpoint... Enjoy the read!

Bios

Emiliano Barletta is an archaeologist, computer scientist, and cartoonist from Rome. He graduated in Near Eastern Ancient Archaeology from Sapienza University of Rome and studied scriptwriting at the Online Comic School of ComicOut. As an archaeologist, he has collaborated with various archaeological missions in Italy and abroad (Syria and Turkey). As a scriptwriter, he has published the graphic novel “Charlie Chaplin. Il funambolo” (NPE, 2019) and the Graphic Novel “Diario di Scavo. Considerazioni finali” (Oblò-APS, 2021). His work in historical and archaeological dissemination has continued with some "postcards" published in the weekly magazine “Internazionale” and several short comics for the “Confederazione Italiana Archeologi” He has also contributed to

the comic anthologies “My Covid in comics” (Caracò Editore, 2021) and “Combatti la paura” (Edizioni il Galeone, 2018). He has collaborated with the magazine “Scuola di Fumetto”, the quarterly “ANTIFAlnzine”, and the portals of Graphic Journalism STORMI ([BeccoGiallo](#)) e [GraphicNews](#).

In the summer of 2012, at the age of twenty, **Alessio Lo Manto** discovered the world of comics and graphic journalism while reading Joe Sacco at the Educational Book Shop in Jerusalem. A series of circumstances later led him to enroll at Grafite - School of Graphics and Comics in Bari, but not before earning a degree in Political Science and spending a few years volunteering abroad. He lives in symbiosis with his cap. He has collaborated with the Graphic Journalism websites STORMI ([BeccoGiallo](#)) and [GraphicNews](#).

ARCHAEOLOGY & COMICS

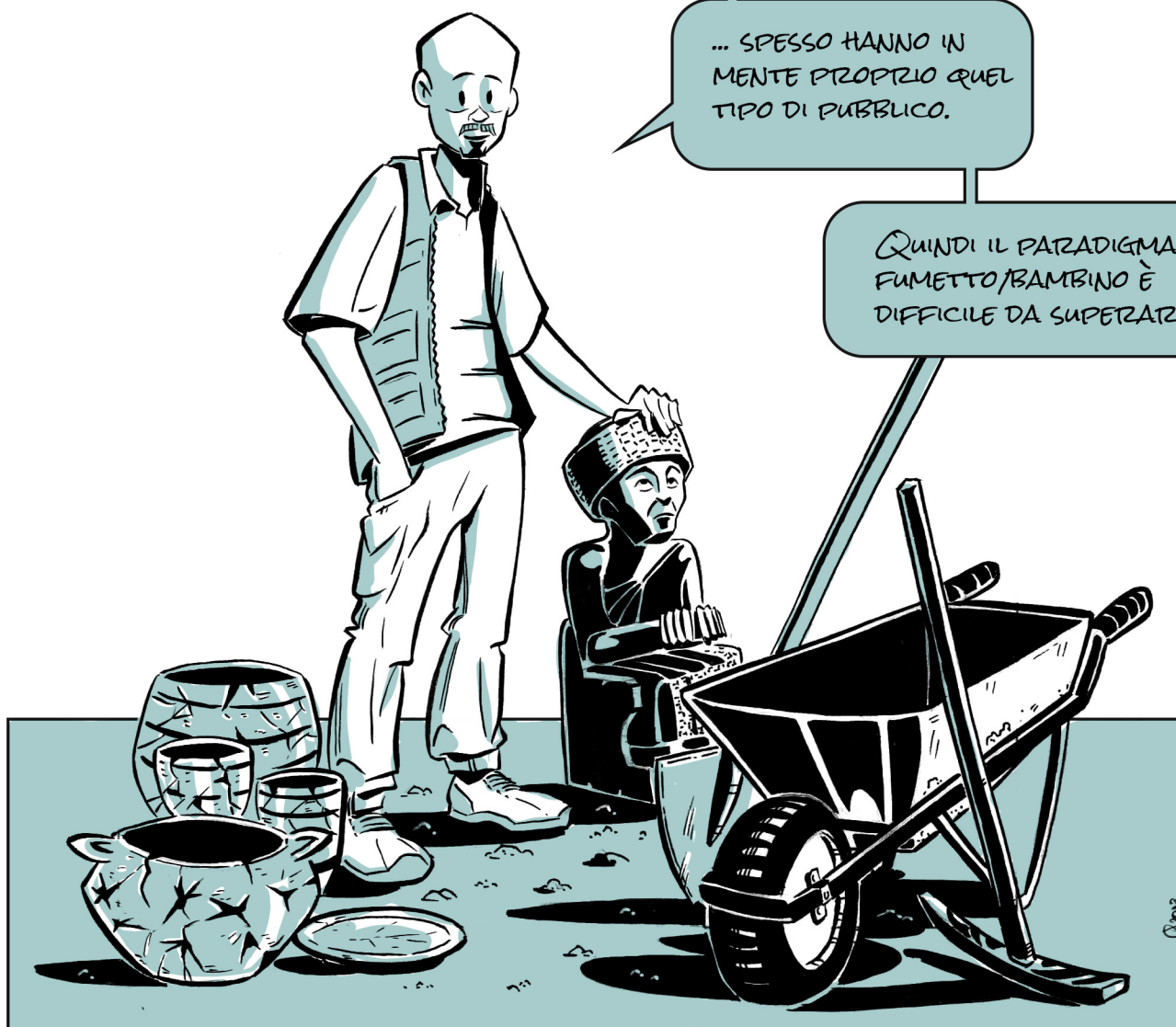
TESTI: EMILIANO BARLETTA
DISEGNI: ALESSIO LO MANTO

QUANDO PARLIAMO DI FUMETTI,
SPESSO SI PENSA AD UN PRODOTTO
PER UN PUBBLICO DI GIOVANISSIMI,
SE NON ADDIRITTURA DI BAMBINI.

GLI EDITORI DI VARIA, CIOÈ NON SPECIALIZZATI
NELL'AMBITO DELLE BANDE DESSINÉE, QUANDO
DECIDONO DI PUBBLICARE OPERE A FUMETTI
CHE PARLANO DI ARCHEOLOGIA ...

... SPESSO HANNO IN
MENTE PROPRIO QUEL
TIPO DI PUBBLICO.

QUINDI IL PARADIGMA
FUMETTO/BAMBINO È
DIFFICILE DA SUPERARE.



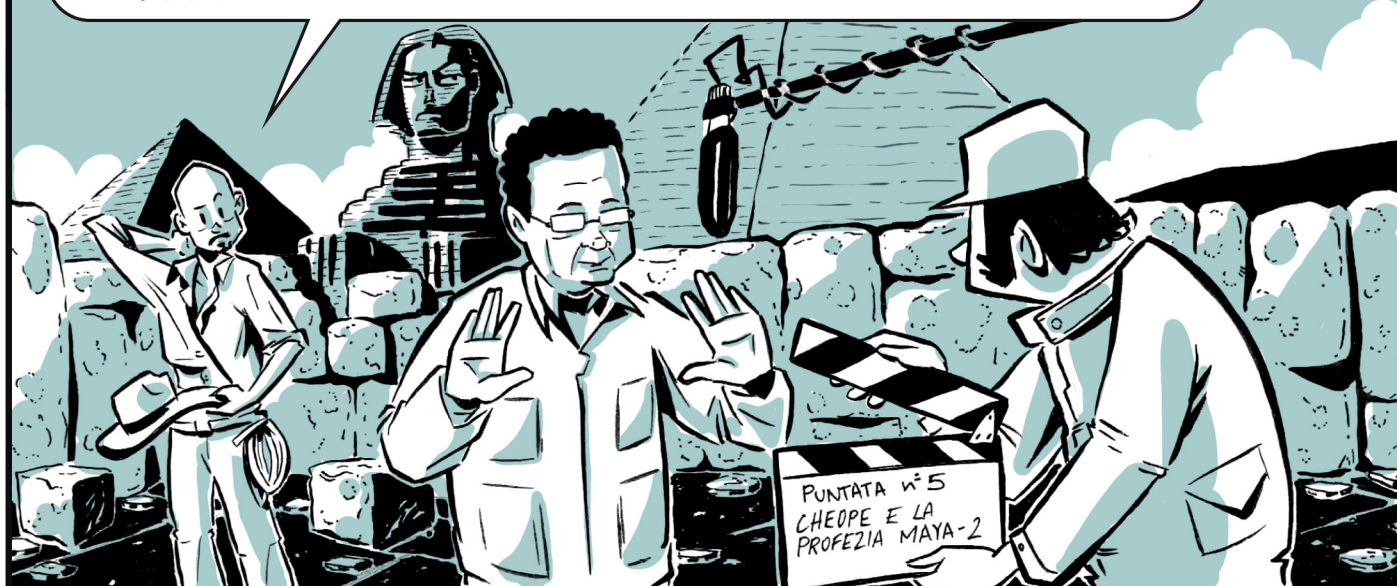
DAL CANTO SUO L'ARCHEOLOGIA, NELL'IMMAGINARIO COLLETTIVO, È SPESSO LEGATA AD UN PERSONAGGIO ICONICO COME INDIANA JONES ...



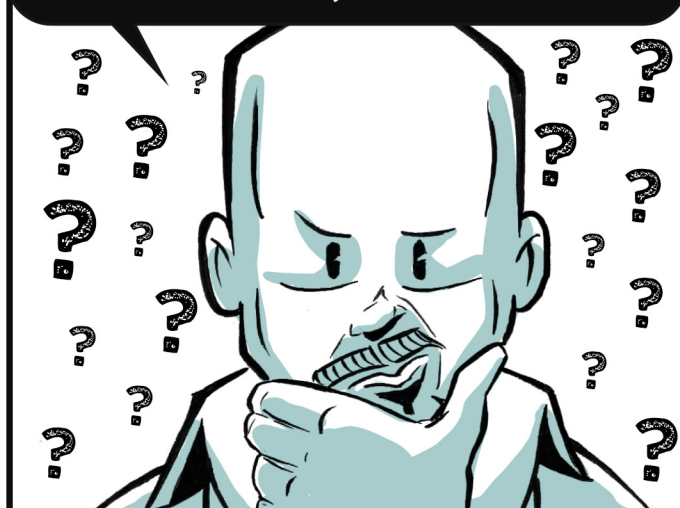
...E NON È MAI PERCEPITA COME UNA VERA SCIENZA, MA COME QUALCOSA DI AVVENTUROSO CHE CHIUNQUE PUÒ FARE LEGGENDO QUALCHE LIBRO.



OVVIAMENTE, COME PER IL RAPPORTO FUMETTO/BAMBINO, ANCHE PER L'ARCHEOLOGIA IL CONCETTO DI NON-SCIENZA AL LIMITE DELL'IMPROVVISAZIONE È SBAGLIATO.



MA COSA PUÒ FARE REALMENTE IL FUMETTO PER AIUTARE LA DIFFUSIONE DELL'ARCHEOLOGIA COME SCIENZA AD UN PUBBLICO ADULTO?



NEGLI ULTIMI ANNI IL FUMETTO SI È AFFERMATO COME UNA DELLE PIÙ IMPORTANTI REALTÀ EDITORIALI.



IL GRAPHIC JOURNALISM/ COMICS JOURNALISM, MA IO PREFERISCO IL TERMINE "FUMETTO DI REALTÀ" ...



... HA PERMESSO DI VEDERE, E NON SOLO DI LEGGERE, LA GUERRA IN BOSNIA, LA REALTÀ PALESTINESE E RECENTEMENTE ANCHE IL KURDISTAN SIRIANO E IRAQENO.



POSSIAMO QUINDI AFFERMARE CHE NEGLI ULTIMI DECENNI, A PARTIRE DALLA FINE DEL SECOLO SCORSO, IL FUMETTO SI È ELEVATO COME MEZZO D'INFORMAZIONE.



NON SORPRENDERÀ
QUINDI CHE IL PIÙ GRANDE
ENTE PUBBLICO DI RICERCA ITALIANO
COME IL CNR HA TRA LE SUE PUBBLICAZIONI
UNA RIVISTA CHE SI CHIAMA
COMICS&SCIENCE ...



... I CUI CURATORI SONO ROBERTO NATALINI,
DIRETTORE DELL' ISTITUTO PER LE APPLICAZIONI
DEL CALCOLO "M. PICONE" ...



... E ANDREA PLAZZI UNO DEI PIÙ
IMPORTANTI EDITORI ITALIANI NEL
CAMPO FUMETTISTICO.



IL FUMETTO, QUINDI, PUÒ ESSERE
LO STRUMENTO PER RACCONTARE
L'ARCHEOLOGIA COME SERIA E VARI-
GATA NEI SUOI ASPETTI.



UN MEZZO
PER MOSTRARE LA
METODOLOGIA E LA RICERCA
SUL CAMPO.



IL PROBLEMA È
TROVARE AUTORI
COMPETENTI SIA SULLA
MATERIA ARCHEOLOGICA
CHE NELLE TECNICHE DEL
LINGUAGGIO VISIVO

... MA ANCHE
EDITORI SPECIALIZZATI,
IN AMBITO ARCHEOLOGICO,
DISPOSTI ALL'INNOVA-
ZIONE.

PER FORTUNA
VIVIAMO IN UN PERIODO
STORICO IN CUI POSSIAMO
SFRUTTARE IL PIÙ GRANDE
MEZZO DI DISTRIBUZIONE
AL MONDO.



INTERNET, IL WORLD WIDE WEB, SONO LA PIATTAFORMA SU CUI SVILUPPARE E SPERIMENTARE IL RACCONTO DI UNO SCAVO ARCHEOLOGICO ATTRAVERSO L'USO DEL FUMETTO, PENSANDO AD UN PUBBLICO VASTO ...

... CON LA CONSAPEVOLEZZA CHE LA PRESENZA DELL'IMMAGINE LIBERA L'AUTORE DALLA DESCRIZIONE, PERMETTENDOGLI DI FOCALIZZARE IL TESTO SOLO SULL' INTERPRETAZIONE.



OVVIAMENTE QUESTA È SOLO UN' INTRODUZIONE E IL POTENZIALE DEL FUMETTO, COME MEZZO PER LA DIVULGAZIONE SCIENTIFICA, È ANCORA TUTTO DA SCOPRIRE.

ARCHAEOLOGY & COMICS

WRITER: EMILIANO BARLETTA

ARTIST: ALESSIO LO MANTO

WHEN WE TALK ABOUT COMIC BOOKS, WE
OFTEN THINK OF A PRODUCT TARGETED
ON A VERY YOUNG AUDIENCE, IF NOT KIDS.

WHEN THE PUBLISHERS OF "VATIA", I.E. NOT
SPECIALIZED IN BANDE DESSINÉE, DECIDE TO
GO FOR A COMIC BOOK ABOUT ARCHAEOLOGY...

... USUALLY THEY
HAVE THAT TYPE OF
READERS IN MIND.

THEREFORE, THE PARADIGM COMIC
BOOKS/KIDS IS A DOMINANT ONE AND
HARD TO CHALLENGE.



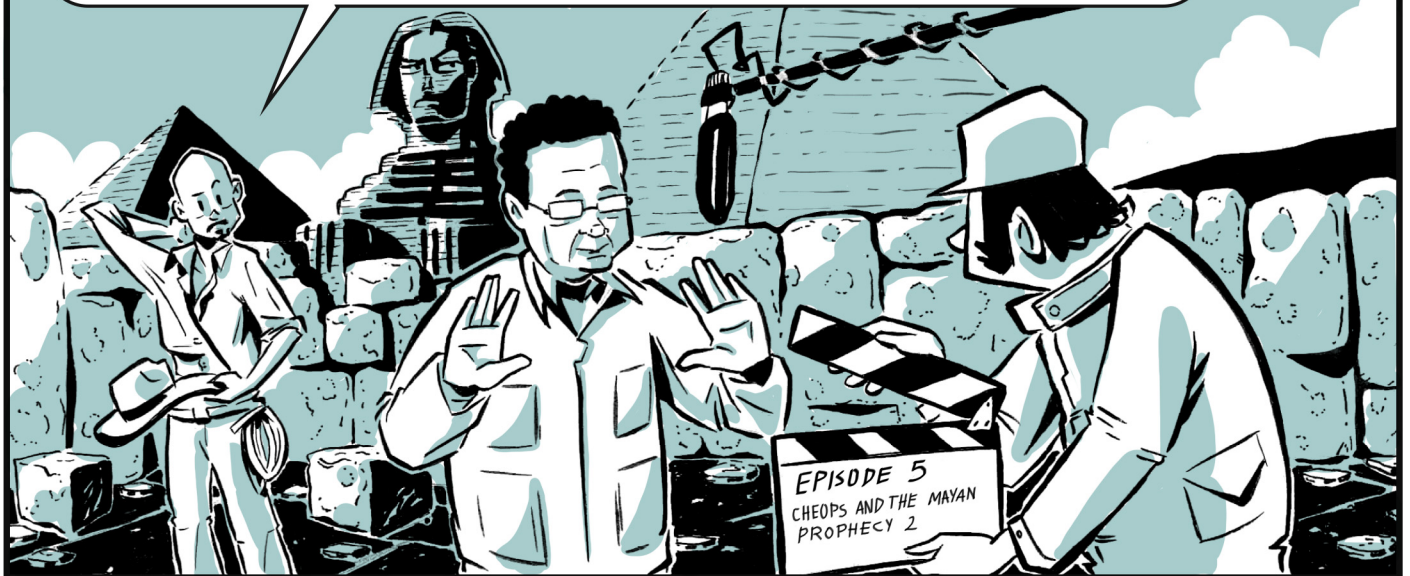
ON THE OTHER HAND, THE PUBLIC IMAGINATION OFTEN ASSOCIATES ARCHAEOLOGY TO ICONIC FIGURES, SUCH AS INDIANA JONES...



...THUS VERY RARELY ARCHAEOLOGY IS CONSIDERED AS A SCIENCE, MOST LIKELY AS SOMETHING ADVENTUROUS THAT ANYONE CAN PRACTICE SIMPLY BY READING A COUPLE OF BOOKS.



AS IN THE EQUATION COMIC BOOKS/ KIDS, CONFINING ARCHAEOLOGY TO A NON-SCIENCE ON THE EDGE OF IMPROVISATION IS EVIDENTLY WRONG.



NEVERTHELESS, HOW CAN COMIC BOOKS REALLY HELP TO DISSEMINATE AMONG AN ADULT AUDIENCE THE IDEA OF ARCHAEOLOGY AS A SCIENCE?



OVER THE LAST YEARS, COMIC BOOKS HAVE BECOME ONE OF THE LEADING PUBLISHING UNDERTAKINGS.



GRAPHIC JOURNALISM OR COMIC JOURNALISM, THOUGH I'D RATHER CALL IT "REALITY COMICS"...



... ENABLED US TO SEE, NOT JUST READ, THE WAR IN BOSNIA, THE REAL SITUATION IN PALESTINE AND MOST RECENTLY ALSO IN BOTH SYRIAN AND IRAQI KURDISTAN.



WE CAN THEREFORE ARGUE THAT OVER THE LAST DECADES, AT THE TURN OF THE NEW MILLENNIUM, COMIC BOOKS HAVE RISEN TO THE RANK OF INFORMATION MEDIA.



IT SHOULDN'T THEN COME AS A SURPRISE THAT THE LARGEST BODY OF RESEARCH IN ITALY, THE CNR, COUNTS AMONG ITS PUBLICATIONS A JOURNAL TITLED "COMICS & SCIENCE"...



... EDITED BY ROBERTO NATALINI, DIRECTOR OF THE ISTITUTO PER LE APPLICAZIONI DEL CALCOLO "M. PICONE"...



...AND ANDREA PLAZZI, ONE OF THE MOST PROMINENT ITALIAN EDITOR IN THE COMIC BOOKS FIELD.



COMIC BOOKS, THUS, COULD ALSO BE A TOOL TO ILLUSTRATE ARCHAEOLOGY AS A SCIENCE IN ITS MULTIPLE ASPECTS.



A TOOL TO EXPLAIN
THE METHODOLOGY AND THE
FIELDWORK



THE PROBLEM
IS TO FIND AUTHORS
WITH RELEVANT EXPERTISE
IN THE FIELD AS WELL AS
VISUAL COMMUNICA-
TION-SAVVY...

... BUT ALSO
ARCHAEOLOGY-SPECIALIZED
PUBLISHERS OPEN TO INNOVATE
THEIR EDITORIAL
CONCEPT.

LUCKILY, WE LIVE
IN A TIME WHERE WE
HAVE EASY ACCESS TO THE
MOST POWERFUL MEANS
OF COMMUNICATION
EVER.



THE INTERNET, THE WORLD WIDE WEB, IS THE PLATFORM WHERE TO DEVELOP AND EXPERIMENT HOW TO TELL THE STORY OF AN EXCAVATION THROUGH COMICS WITH A WIDER AUDIENCE IN MIND...

... KNOWING THAT THE PRESENCE OF IMAGES FREE THE AUTHOR FROM THE DESCRIPTION AND ALLOW TO KEEP THE SCRIPT FOCUSED ONLY ON THE INTERPRETATION.



Clearly, this is just an introduction and the real potential of comic books to disseminate scientific research still goes largely untapped.

EX NOVO Journal of Archaeology

Volume 7 - December 2022

THE INTERNET, THE WORLD WIDE WEB, IS THE PLATFORM WHERE TO DEVELOP AND EXPERIMENT HOW TO TELL THE STORY OF AN EXCAVATION THROUGH COMICS WITH A WIDER AUDIENCE IN MIND...

Martina REVELLO LAMI, Jesus GARCIA SÁNCHEZ, Maja GORI
Foreword

Jacoba HIDALGO MASA
Crossed presents. Iron Age as a driving force in the construction of the current Basque political reality

Stavros OIKONOMIDIS
Dido's foundation legend, archetypes of foundation myths in Eurasia and Neomythology in the nineteenth century Balkans

Claudio CAVAZZUTI
Brexit, la "rivolta populista" e il futuro dell'archeologia

Alessandro PINTUCCI
Tutto l'ambaradan intorno alla rimozione dei monumenti agli schiavisti: Critica (un po') ragionata.

Francesca DELL'ERA
Di tutela, immondizia e nomadismo. Riflessioni a margine di una sorveglianza archeologica in corso d'opera

Emiliano BARLETTA & Alessio LO MANTO
Archaeology & Comics.

... KNOWING THAT THE PRESENCE OF IMAGES FREE THE AUTHOR FROM THE DESCRIPTION AND ALLOW TO KEEP THE SCRIPT FOCUSED ONLY ON THE INTERPRETATION.



CLEARLY, THIS IS JUST AN INTRODUCTION AND THE REAL POTENTIAL OF COMIC BOOKS TO DISSEMINATE SCIENTIFIC RESEARCH STILL GOES LARGELY UNTAPPED.