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VOLUME 2 / 2018

Topic of the Year: The Sublime Triangle

3OPEN ACCESS

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INDEX

	Cinzia Dal Maso & Luca Peyronel	
11	Memories	
	What is meant by 'archaeology' today? Daniele Manacorda	13
	Saranda 1998: A vision for Butrint and other cultural heritage strategies Richard Hodges	17
27	Topic of the Year	
	'Museums without walls' and sustainable development in Jordan. Some thoughts from the Madaba Regional Archaeological Museum Project Marta D'Andrea, Andrea Polcaro, Douglas R. Clark, Suzanne Richard	29
	The conquest of Akragas: How the past changed the present in the Valley of the Temples (Agrigento, Sicily) Laura Danile, Giovanni Virruso & Claudia Speciale	47
	Community-centred supply chains and sustainable archaeological tourism Peter G. Gould	61
	Archaeology and Cultural Routes: A relationship to develop Alessio Innocenti	75
	'Multicultural Public Archaeology'. A strategy to expanding multicultural audience in Sicilian archaeological museums Flavia Zisa	89

Satura Lanx

	Aldo Di Russo	99
	In the Lombards' footsteps: Proposals for educational visits to localities in the UNESCO serial site "The Longobards in Italy. Places of power (AD 568-774)" Francesca Morandini, Maria Stovali & Angela Maria Ferroni	115
125	Archaeotales	
	The Man in Chains from Baratti, the slave that dreamt of freedom Mariangela Galatea Vaglio	127
	Medusa, the goddess of Poggio del Molino Mariangela Galatea Vaglio	129
	Ötzi, the last of the shamans Giorgia Cappelletti	133
139	News	
	Five years of Digital Invasions, and they do not cease to	141
	amaze and innovate Cinzia Dal Maso	
	amaze and innovate	145
	amaze and innovate Cinzia Dal Maso What is PArCo, the Public Archeology Park	145 149
	amaze and innovate Cinzia Dal Maso What is PArCo, the Public Archeology Park Cinzia Dal Maso Exhibited in Populonia the recently discovered Man in Chains from Baratti	

	Giuliano De Felice	
	The Symbola Report and professions in archaeology: What the numbers say Chiara Boracchi	157
161	Reviews	
	Strength and ethics of the context: Giving a true meaning to History and to our lives *Daniele Manacorda*	163
	Exploring public archaeology Francesco Ripanti	167
	Cinema in the Stone Age or a film about the Stone Age? Alessandra Cilio	171
	Father and Son: Videogame or emotional experience? Giuliano De Felice	175

Faragola. Destruction and reconstruction of an archaeological site

155



The conquest of Akragas: How the past changed the present in the Valley of the Temples (Agrigento, Sicily)

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Abstract

PastActivity is a young cultural association of archaeologists and educational experts that organised in May 2017 their first project: a big re-enactment event in Sicily. The scenario was the World Heritage Site Archaeological and Landscape Park of the Valley of the Temples in Agrigento. The context was the conquest of Akragas in 210 BC. Both secondary school and university students, as well as local and national Roman and Punic re-enactors, young professionals, and small enterprises of the territory were all involved in the management and development of the project. Use of social media was crucial for involvement of the public during the months before production. The main aim of the project was to put into practice a new way to communicate history to the public, utilizing tools of living history, guided tours, and didactic activities. The results were positive and the objectives were achieved: for the first time, more than 13,000 people (3,400 on Saturday and 9,700 on Sunday) accessed the Park during a single weekend. The visitors behaved in a tidy manner by promenading through the Greek ruins and meticulous reconstructions of the past; the team developed new skills about popularization and communication and learned how to build bridges between academic groups and the community.

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Solution Keywords: Agrigento, valley of the temples, popularization, re-enactment, living history

Introduction

The project Con le mani nel passato ('The past in your hands') started after a short collaboration of the three authors for a congress poster regarding the role of archaeological museums in present-day Italy-with a focus on Sicily. The final paragraph of the published paper said "Main aim of whoever works in cultural heritage should be taking as many people as possible to the Museum; and not only scholars but also families with children, schools and young people. They have to feel cultural place as a collective point and an amusing, educating spot. Sicilian museums should become a place with new languages being spoken for the latest generation and a destination for many more people" (Danile et al. 2014a, p. 163). Our wish was to see the Faro Convention starting get real also in Sicily and to promote the right to the cultural heritage as collective heritage and

inheritance (Volpe 2016, pp. 29-40). More specifically, as "Europeans recognize a high value for archaeology at the local and national level and they are very interested in the practices and methods of archaeologist" (NEARCH 2017), we would like to reinforce this historical and archaeological interest in our region.

The conclusion of our paper was the beginning of our new common purpose. Starting from an original idea, we wanted then to put together all our skills and experiences about communication for cultural heritage. We had the necessary courage, creativity, and desire to experiment too. If you asked, "which came first, the call or the project", we would not be able to answer because they worked in parallel. The papers we submitted last minute for the open call CreAzioni Giovani of the Sicily Region in 2013 ('Young creActions') were a confused compound of activities within the Valley of the Temples in Agrigento, with the sole bond of education programs as background.

The re-enactment project

Why all this? A wider perspective of cultural heritage in the territory

The location of our event was the Archaeological Park of the Valley of the Temples of Agrigento, one of the biggest archaeological parks in the world. A World Heritage site since 1997, famous for the Doric temples built on a long hill, as a sacred belt around the city, the area is very visible when arriving from the sea.

Agrigento has a long history, since the foundation of the Greek colony of *Akragas* in the early 6th century BC through modern day. The Greek period is the most well-known because its ruins are aesthetically pleasing and very well preserved. The so-called Temple of Concordia, for example, is one of the best preserved in the Greek world. However, in the previous years investigations were targeted towards the Roman and Late Roman periods of the city called *Agrigentum*.

After many centuries of investigations of the Roman houses and the public area and different hypotheses, at last the theatre of Agrigento was recently discovered. Several exhibitions and international conferences with focus on the Roman and Late Roman period were organized in Agrigento. They concerned different aspects related to antiquity: landscapes, local productions, urban changes, recent excavations (Parello & Rizzo 2016; LRCW 6 2017). For these reasons, in agreement with the Director of the Park, we chose the moment of the Roman conquest of *Akragas*.

This project coincides with the strategy of the Park. In recent years, the Park has achieved good results with several programs enlarging public engagement and diversifying the programs (Parello & Rizzo 2016; Danile et al. 2014b). These programs include activities for families and for children of the primary school and following with projects of Alternanza scuola lavoro¹ ('alternating school and job projects'), offering the possibility to visit the new excavations while the archaeologists are working. The Park tries to involve the local community as much as possible in their projects with guided tours, didactic activities, events for families with kids, membership card. These activities were useful to establish a contact with the local community and in order to create enthusiasm and interest regarding cultural

heritage and the work of the archaeologists (Dallo scavo al Museo, Archeologo in aula, Collige et Serva, Nea Akragas, ArcheoCiak, Doctum Doces, #domenicalparco etc: Caminneci et al. 2015), following the line of Public Archaeology (de Groot 2009), only a recent occurrence in Italy (Ripanti 2017, pp. 95-100) and the idea of participatory archaeology (Volpe 2016, pp. 52-53). The Archaeological Park is not only a place of study and education but also a place of enjoyment, with an important social role for the local community and its development (ICOM 2007; Exarc Home Page).

Even if it is not very easy to reach the place, (Agrigento does not have an airport and it is very peripheral for the rest of Italy), the historical value of the place gave strength to our event and a lot of visibility.

Who are we? First steps and working team

When, three years after writing the project, we had the real possibility to put into practice our event, we started to plan the details, involving our team with other experts who could support us with their skills. First of all, it was important to have an artistic director who had a lot of experience with ancient history reenactment: Andrea Moretti of moroeventi.com was the choice. He has more than 20 years of experience with large festivals and historical re-enactment events in Northern Italy and internationally.

Second, we needed somebody who could help us to build our brand-identity and our communication strategy both online (logo, web-site in Italian and English, social media account like Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, Google plus) and offline (flyers, brochures, business cards, posters). In our opinion, communication strategy was one of the most important components for the success of the event, starting with audience development. Later, we looked for a press office to have a constant visibility in the regional press and manage an editorial plan.

Still, when we had the first meetings of training courses with the students that helped us throughout the development of the project, the focus on Roman times was quite unclear. Then we had the chance to share this path with Andrea Moretti, who helped us in re-shaping the initial idea and starting to make the project



Fig. 1. The art director at work. Photo by A. Falzone

more likely and coherent (Figure 1). Andrea built the team of re-enactors choosing the most suitable groups for our needs: Mos Maiorum (Mos Maiorum) Associazione Culturale S.P.Q.R (Associazione Culturale S.P.Q.R), Simmachia Ellenon (Simmachia Ellenon), Evropa Antiqua (Federazione EVROPANTIQVA Home), all are serious and enthusiastic about taking part to this new project. It was a challenge for everybody and we worked hard to achieve a good result. Two small local groups asked to take part in our event and they had the possibility to learn a lot about the historical groups and enrich their own experience (Archeocuisine joined to be the Carthaginians and *Legio XV Apollinaris* became the Romans). This involvement was crucial in the establishment of the 'core' regional reenactors, to start building a tradition and a continuity of Sicilian living history. Living history and historical re-enactment belong to tradition and uses of Northern and Central Italy (see for example the Consortium for European Re-enactment Societies, that reports a very low percentage in Southern Italian Associations and just one association from Sicily, Consortium of European Re-enactment Societies Home Page 2018). Southern Italy has always had some developmental delay in new communicative strategies for cultural heritage and communication in open-air museums.

The project was then developed thanks to a team of selected students from the MA of Archaeology and Cultural Heritage of University of Palermo and the High School *Liceo Classico Empedocle* of Agrigento; they followed all the management of the event and were the guides through the camps during the event (Figure 2). These two groups were involved from the beginning, starting with the project phase and followed with the executive phase. They were an important resource to

exemplify the target we wanted to reach (e.g. the young public). We also had useful support from AUSER, University of the third age of Agrigento, who helped us with logistics of the final event, mostly for reception/information as our "front office", to say welcome and goodbye with kindness and courtesy. The AUSER group were also our ambassadors. Everyone involved his or her family, neighbours, colleagues, and friends; arousing interests, curiosity, and expectations therefore, they were an integral component for involving and creating connections with the local community.

In order to enrich our small budget, we involved some local sponsors. At the beginning, it was not easy because we were new and unknown and our event was the first of this kind in Sicily. We perceived an initial distrust, but at the end, some brands decided to support us for different reasons. A company that produces sweets with local products decided to believe in our project, made by young people. They offered us their products for our meetings and for the breakfast of the re-enactors during the event. A local jewellery designer, who created a brand related to the enhancement of Sicilian traditions, decided to support our historical project, interpreting it as a way to valorise customs and history. Other local actors decided to sustain as much as they could our project, believing that we could become an important resource for the city.



Fig. 2. PastActivity's team. Archive photo.

What for? Objectives in the middle of the path

The main aim of the project was the same since the beginning, but now with new content: to find a new way for the enhancement of cultural heritage in Sicily, following the experiences of other European archaeological

sites: Tarraco Viva at Tarragona, Le Grand Jeux Romains at Nimes, Bundan Celtic Festival at Stellata di Bondeno (Ferrara), Mutina Boica at Modena, Venigallia at Castelnovo di Isola Vicentina (Vicenza), Preistorica at Travo (Piacenza), Monterenzio Celtica on the hills around Bologna, all events where entire sites are transformed on historical places in every single detail. In addition, in Rome it is possible to relive some important historical moments thanks to different associations that re-enact them (Melotti 2015). The topic of the regional call for funding (professional education for young people in the Sicilian region) pushed us to expand our minds also to improve the skills of young archaeologists. One of the best examples for us, the Nearch Project, was conducted by the French National Institute for Preventive Archaeological Research (Inrap). Starting from a survey among different groups of population of European countries, results of the project show the need to re-think communication in archaeology according to the audience and promote new ways to teach archaeological and historical knowledge to young professionals. Luckily, archaeology is still seen as socially valuable and most Europeans maintain positive attitudes towards its development and investment. They underline that most of the archaeological knowledge is comprehensive only for a professional audience also when the material is available online. We had the possibility to read their documents online thanks to their helpful web site and this was one of the first steps of our project. NEARCH includes five themes: involving (informing and involving the community in archaeology), imagining (finding links between science and art), sharing (teaching and sharing information and knowledge), innovating (trying to find sustainability in a changing economy), and connecting archaeologist in the world (Kajda et al. 2018; NEARCH 2017). These were also all keywords in our job.

The objective of our project was also to demonstrate that visiting an area of archaeological activity can be an unforgettable experience, if the ruins can speak a universal language: the language of history. Activities are suited for a wide range of people: researchers, enthusiasts, families, schools, including young and old people, travellers, and any other lover of history. This approach combines scientific bases with new communicative languages

(based on hands-on activities, interactive labs, full-scale reconstructions of everyday objects, and visits with the re-enactors) giving everyone the chance to dive into a lost world. Museums nowadays should increase their public also finding new methods to attract visitors with different programs dedicated to different public sectors (Kotler & Kotler 2004, pp. 52-56). The role of the archaeologist is changing a lot and they need to rethink their role in society: they need credibility, consensus, sharing, and involvement (Volpe 2016, pp. 58-59).

Our secondary aim was to offer to the general public a possibility to experience history as leading actors, according with the lifelong learning model and a way to promote a participant use of the archaeological site using Simon's approach in *The Participatory Museum* (Simon 2010): the idea that visitors construct their own meaning from cultural experiences was integral to our mission. New approaches can always be difficult to share, both with the scientific community and with the public (Volpe 2016, p. 91). Nevertheless, we were aware of this difficulty and not worried at all.

Finally, there was a possibility to create new job-opportunities, for different kinds of professionals related to cultural heritage, mainly opportunities for young people that could remain in Sicily instead of going abroad looking for employment. This event and all the other following events could enlarge the tourist attractions of the city. Involvement of the local community reinforces local identity and also obtains an empowerment of the tourism (Nedelea et al. 2016).

How do we come out of the closet? Communication strategies

One of the most interesting challenges that we faced during the months before the event is related to the project's communication of the historical re-enactment event that was scheduled to be completed.

Even with our limited budget, the involvement of Daniela Frenna, who works in communication and had a lot of experience with the *Farm Cultural Park* of Favara, was integral and allowed us to make the most of the viral potential of social channels and other forms of spreading news about the event. Some of these aspects were new for us. We had to enrich our communicative skills and to learn

new languages related to the different social networks following the literature on this topic (Bonacini 2010, 2011; D'Eredità 2016; Lo Blundo 2013; Lo Blundo & Marras 2016; Zuanni 2017). We also had to learn new skills in creating videos, infographics, and photographs using online courses and also following some websites related to communication of the past (Archeostorie Magazine Home Page 2018; Archeokids Home Page 2018). To reach as many people as possible we used the low-cost system of digital networks: Twitter, Instagram, and especially Facebook, which is the most platform used by museums to communicate news and events (D'Eredità et al. 2016, p. 332). We were conscious that this choice could be useful to reach only an audience that uses digital media so a few weeks before the final event we enlarged our advertising campaign with physical posters in the area of the town. We also created many press releases for the local media and some events to present the re-enactment (at the University, at the Archaeological Park, in local schools).

We launched social media campaigns on Facebook, during specific moments of the year or related to the publication of crucial activities for the project, in order to attract the interest of the public as much as possible; this allowed us to spread our Facebook page on the regional territory, targeting our campaigns especially to people interested in history and cultural heritage.

The use of the social networks allowed us to also involve our private contacts and enlarge our network thanks to the sharing of our post related to the event and the historical facts of that period as well as news related to ancient history and archaeology. We had a strategy and a publication plan that included specific hashtags for each day of the week (#cominciamocolpassato, #mercolechi, #giovenellabattaglia, #archeoweek, and #friendlysunday). The aim was to get our followers familiar with the Facebook page and keep their interest alive through the weeks before the event.

We also created original content (e.g. infographics and videos). Google Analytics indicated this original content had the most views on our website. At the beginning of May, we had more of 1,800 followers on Facebook (previously, in January, there were 1,000 followers). For example, the infographics related to the history of the city from its

foundation to the roman conquest, reached 6,000 people on Facebook, had 590 clicks and 312 interactions or comments. The video had even more views than the infographics. The most loved video was the promo of the event, an original idea directed by Giorgio Franchetti (SPQR) who used our students as actors in historical clothes (Figure 3). This amusing activity involved all of the team for several days of hard work. Giorgio also made another video where the art director explained the event. This reached 62,000 people, had 16,564 views and 1929 interactions.



Fig. 3. Backstage of the promo. Photo by L. Danile.

One of the best experiences during the preevent months was the collaboration with Elisa Bonacini, an Italian researcher working on public archaeology and digitalisation of cultural heritage. Her post-doctoral project is based on popularization and digitalization of cultural heritage in Sicily (Bonacini 2011, 2012); she started collaborating with izi.TRAVEL, which is a free digital platform for geolocated audio guides. Following the students along their path towards the event, Elisa decided to develop a "special" audio guide for the event, not only was it recorded by the students themselves: we built up the first theatricalized archaeological audio guide (PastActivity 2018). Studying the literary sources and analysing the Park and the possible routes within it, we imagined that the visitor could follow the Roman consul Levinus during his walk through the ruins of the justdestroyed city of Akragas; we hypothesized he met people from the city to ask them about the monuments. The students had an important role in the making of the guide and recorded their voices giving life to Akragantini. We now have an alternative, moving, and historical tour within the Park, it is still available for visitors



Fig. 4. Punic tent camp near the temple of Zeus. Photo by C. Cipolla.

that are enjoying its use (reflected in positive feedback on the website).

Finally, we took a part in some of the most important events, exhibitions, and fairs in Italy related to re-enactment and archaeology to have direct contact with some of the groups involved in to the project and to try the experience: Usi e Costumi at Ferrara, the annual fair dedicated to the dissemination of history and traditions to develop a sustainable tourism where you can find a lot of living history association; TourismA, the annual event dedicated to archaeology and cultural tourism that take place at Florence in February; I giorni romani di Paestum, a living history event inside the archaeological park dedicated to the Roman time. It was also useful to promote the event in a national context and enlarge our network with direct contacts.

Tales to tell. The historical context of May 6-7th 2017

People say, "make love, not war", but love does not have a crucial role in historical dynamics and development, unluckily for the human species. We needed an important episode to highlight.

In the 3rd century BC, the great conflict between the Sicilian cities provoked their progressive weakening and increased the involvement of Rome and Carthage in Sicilian economic and political affairs. The possession of Sicily, due to its geographic position, became increasingly crucial to the predominance in the

Mediterranean. Inevitably, Akragas/Agrigentum and the rest of the island were involved in the Punic wars. In 255 BC the Carthaginians succeeded in reoccupying Agrigento, but at the end of the First Punic war Agrigento passed again under the rule of the Romans and in the second Punic war was faithful to the new conquerors. For another brief period, it was reconquered by the Carthaginian Imilcone, before falling definitively under the power of Rome. Towards the end of the 210 BC, Consul Marco Valerio Levino arrived in Sicily with the goal of settling what was still suspended in Syracuse during the last alliance. The city was the last stronghold of the Carthaginians. Tito Livio says that the "chance favoured the challenge" (Titus Livy, 25.23).

The general of the Carthaginians was the one who had fought in the proximity of *Himera* in 212 BC. However, everyone's hope was in the Numidi and in Muttine. Once the necessary arrangements were fixed, the Numidi occupied



Fig. 5. Weaving activities. Photo by C. Cipolla.



Fig. 6. Punic ritual. Photo by C. Cipolla

one of the gates to the city, killing the guards, and welcoming the Romans into the city. Many of the Carthaginians and Sicilians in the city fled without even trying to fight, and since the doors were closed, many of them were killed in front of the doors.

Once Agrigento was occupied, Levino ordered the decapitation of the most important citizens after having them beaten by the rods. All the others were sold as slaves and the money

was sent to Rome. As the news of the fall of Agrigento spread through Sicily, the fate of the war on the island turned to benefit the Romans.

With this historical scenario as the background, the activities of the event took place within both of the ten camps and near the huge Temple of Zeus (Figure 4). In the shade of stone column drums, there were the didactics of medicine, weaving activities, games, writing, weapons, and cosmetics carried out involving



Fig. 7. Final battle between Romans and Carthaginians. Photo by S. Varisano

the visitors, enthusiastically trying to weave or cope with an abacus. Those who wanted to taste the Punic and Roman cuisines came into the camps between the fires and pots. The bravest ones were also able to experience the puls punica (the typical Punic meal) or the infamous Roman garum (a fish sauce), finding it pleasantly tasty despite its bad reputation. Walking among the tents of the soldiers' camps, visitors plunged into daily life at the end of 3rd century BC. They met women spinning wool or a doctor treating a wound, admired the amazing glass necklaces made by Carthaginians, watched some of the scenes of military training to feel like they are the leading characters of this colourful and resounding experience (Figure 5).

On Saturday afternoon and Sunday morning, the Punics could invoke their gods in an attempt to receive their favours for the imminent battle against the Romans, now at the gates of the city. Everybody could take part in the ritual offering of flowers near the sacred fire, while the priest was raising his prayers to the gods (Figure 6).

Finally, on Sunday afternoon, in front of hundreds of sceptic audience members, close to the temple of Juno, the big battle between the two armies took place, moved by the magic hands of the puppet master Andrea Moretti. Finally yet importantly, the weekend had this great show with a noisy grand finale (Figure 7).

What was it for? Numbers and results

For the first time, more than 13,000 people (3,400 on Saturday and 9,700 on Sunday) accessed the Park during a single weekend promenading through the Greek ruins and meticulous reconstructions of the past (Figure 8). There were many sectors of the public present: university professors, schoolteachers, and students, families with children, fans, locals, tourists and many other young people. Everyone was intrigued and attracted by something different, but we can say that no one left the place without having found new ideas and fresh impulses for reading historical facts. Their smiles were the first well-visible positive feedback and the best reward for our hard work. We had the proof that "people are hungry for culture" and they love to be personally involved in these kinds of events, close to them (Volpe 2016, p. 131).

Feedback was rich but varied: some of the participants preferred the battle show, some others the details of the stories emerging from the rebuilt objects displayed in the field, also some people appreciated the many unexpected curiosities described by the re-enactors who assiduously conversed with the public through the days. Re-enactors endured with indefinable enthusiasm the fatigue they had on the long bus ride before getting to Agrigento.



Fig. 8. Final Battle: the public. Photo by V. Zanini.

Provenance

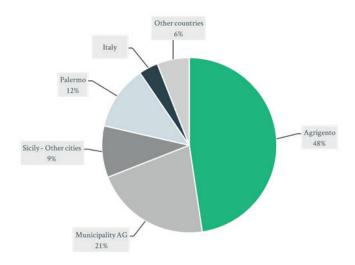


Fig. 9. Collected data: Provenance

The day after in Agrigento, everyone spoke of the event in cafés, newspapers, radio and it was welcoming funny to see that the history involved the wide public. People spoke also about the historical facts and about the reasons of the Romans to fight, etc. People started to program a new re-enactment event for the next year before we could even begin to plan another event. We can say that we created a new desire and the positive results exceeded our expectations. In order to have direct contact

with the public, we distributed more than 100 paper questionnaires randomly during the event to visitors of all the ages and provenances. Collection of questionnaires is quite a common practice for cultural events (see e.g. Audiences London 2011). Questions were related to personal information (their provenance, age, job, first time in the Valley or not, first time for a re-enactment event, etc.) and the evaluation of some parameters in the satisfaction for the event (visitor's involvement, organisation, education,

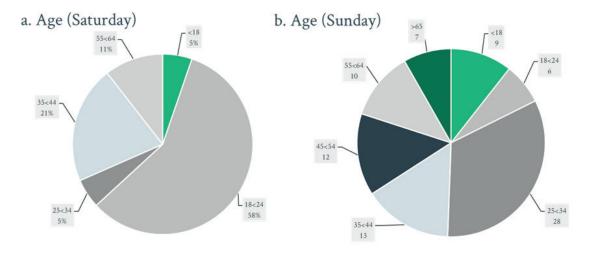


Fig. 10. Collected data: a. Age of visitors on Saturday (<18 could be underrated due to the distribution of the questionnaires). b. Age of visitors on Sunday

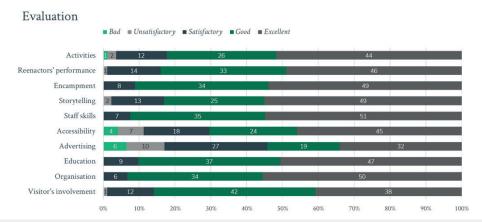


Fig. 11. Collected data: evaluation of ten different topics

advertising, accessibility of the places, staff skills, storytelling, quality of the encampment, reenactors' performance, proposed activities). We obtained 105 completed questionnaire forms.

The answer concerning provenance, 48% of people were from Agrigento; if we also consider the municipality of the city, the percentage was 72 (Figure 9). Nevertheless, we can say that half of the people were not local and that most of them had to travel from other villages/cities, facing the often-tricky regional transportation on Sunday or driving more than an hour to get to the event. People from Palermo (about 2 and a half hours by car) represented a high percentage with 12%. All the other cities/villages were represented by 8% of responders (so in total we had 92% from Sicily). Tourists (8%) were coming from Italy (3%) and abroad (5%).

People from all ages were involved; Saturday afternoon was focused more on young people (58% percent was 18>24) (Figure 10a), while Sunday was more diverse, with a third (33%) 25<34, 29% between 35<54, 7% 18>24 and 11% <18, despite more than half of the visitors declared they came with one or more children (Figure 10b). 83% of the total of the visitors during the 2 days had already visited the site, so 17% was attracted for the first time to the Valley of the Temples thanks to the event. This result is not to read in a negative sense: involving more and more people in the enjoyment of local cultural heritage is definitely one of the main aims of our activities, but "connecting" with the visitors and giving them good reasons to visit the Park several times in a year is definitely one of the most significant results; it creates a deep bond between the territory and its resources and identity. 87% percent of the visitors in the 2 days had never attended a re-enactment event before, so this experience gave them the possibility to plunge into this interactive past for the first time.

Analysing the evaluations of the ten different topics (Figure 11), we can say that the most appreciated aspects of the event were the organisation, staff skills, reenactors' performances, and visitor's involvement (with a high percentage of good/excellent votes). On the other hand, accessibility within the site was evaluated very differently by visitors, with a medium level of satisfaction (11% bad/unsatisfactory, 18% satisfactory, good/excellent); quite unanimously, most of the negative ratings were addressed to advertising (almost 20% of visitors defined it as bad or unsatisfactory). If we compare this evaluation of advertising with data from another part of the questionnaire ("how did you know about it?") and the fact that more than half of the responses said they knew about the event thanks to word of mouth, it is clear that advertising strategies should be implemented for the next event (Figure 12).

Conclusions: present situation and future plans

After 8 months of work, the re-enactment event was the conclusion of the project Con le mani nel passato. During this period, we gave life to a new cultural association, PastActivity, which emerged and developed a network of contacts useful as cooperating partners in the

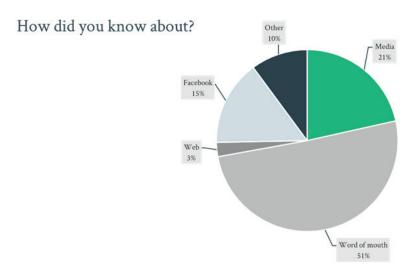


Fig. 12. Information system

future. The name PastActivity and our logo reflected our wish to give back the colours to the past, to make history come alive and closer for the public.

If we want to blame ourselves to try and get better, we have to point out all of the weak points that this first challenge had.

- The risk of lowering the content level in the "vulgarization" of culture is always present and for this reason the role of professionals is essential (Montanari & Trione 2017). A deep knowledge of history is needed, joined with other communication skills that unfortunately today are rarely included in university courses (with some excellent exceptions as the University of Siena or the IULM, International University of Language and Media, Milan).
- wide public audience obviously requires a careful reading and interpretation of the historical events; the storytelling made by the archaeologists was essential to make the history come alive and to create a connection with the public (Volpe 2016, p. 116). Over the past few months, we had to study the second Punic war carefully and we read the few sources regarding the siege of Agrigento to understand how to effectively reenact an episode philologically linked to that historic moment. The results were certainly great, but we have undoubtedly

- found some weak points that should be overcome in the future.
- One crucial point to improve is the advertising. We were conscious that we did what we could with our small budget. For the next event, we would like to reach a wider public audience and more effectively involve tour operators. To attract foreign tourists, it is necessary to have the program a year or more before the event. Having a yearly event, it would mean involving more tour operators and foreign visitors during May with a regular calendar.
- We had a similar problem with the school trips. We should have communicated our program at the beginning of their school year in September, to give them the possibility to insert it in the school's schedule. Regarding the local schools the weekend discouraged their presence. In the future, we should include one day during the week (Friday or Monday) to allow them to come.

On the other hand, positive feedback was abundant and our lesson was learned. The team developed new skills about popularization and communication and learned how to build bridges between academic groups and the community; all the students involved studied history and archaeology from another perspective and improved their capacity to relate with very different public sectors; this "is a duty of those who have chosen this course

of study" (Volpe 2016, p. 114). Our training was also useful in the direction of public archaeology, in order to involve and reach a wider part of the community and in order to give a better visibility to our heritage on the internet. Lack of visibility on the internet is one of the weaknesses of Sicily, which was well demonstrated by the complete survey made by Bonacini (2012).

We conclude to keep using the past to build a brighter present and - even more - a virtuous future where love will be the topic of reenactment events.

Notes

Alternanza Scuola-Lavoro is a teaching method in the Italian Schools since 2005. It is an educational and training method that is transversal to all the channels of the educationtraining system (high school system, technical institutes and professional training) and is aimed at students aged 15 and over. It is mandatory for all students and students of the last three years of high school, including high schools, is one of the most significant innovations of law 107 of 2015 (the Buona Scuola) in line with the principle of open school. Enterprises become a cultural and educational reference point for the school: they take an active role in updating the school on the professional profiles and skills required in the world of work.

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