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Culture has no borders is the slogan of the 2017 edition of Digital Invasions, a two-week joyful and playful wave of ideas that for five years has been invading many cultural destinations in Italy. Although inspired by the multiple walls recently built across the world, the slogan embodies the very spirit of the Invasions, an initiative that, since 2013, has succeeded in dismantling the boundaries of art and culture while turning cultural visits into exciting, shareable experiences. The number of ‘invasions’ and ‘invaders’ has been growing exponentially over the years, increasing from the 225 events of 2013 to the 410 of 2016, for a total of 1500 events and 50000 people involved in four years. And in 2017 the total number of invasions organized was 300.

How was this project born? Before the ‘Art Bonus’ decree came into effect in Italy, allowing for the free reproduction of all types of heritage objects, and the ‘no-photos’ signs dominated in museums and galleries, Digital Invasions encouraged people to ‘invade’ cultural sites with their smartphones and share pictures on social media. It was a brave initiative which definitely gave a boost to the sluggish world of cultural heritage. A sort of wake-up call to streamline the museum experience. ‘But there is still a lot to do to reconnect people with museums, and make everyone acknowledge the immense potential that internet and social media hold in the promotion of our cultural heritage’, states Marianna Marcucci, digital strategist working in tourism and culture and Digital Invasions’ co-founder with Fabrizio Todisco.

Why Digital Invasions?

Because, while the phenomenon of social networks was exploding, the cultural heritage sector had very little social presence; in 2013, social communication on cultural sites was just a one-way flow of curatorial expertise, completely lacking UGC, user-generated content. Visiting cultural sites was a passive and boring experience, and people were increasingly losing interest in the cultural heritage. With Digital Invasions we aim to reconnect people with museums, inviting them to participate in digital word-of-mouth marketing and encouraging them to visit cultural sites, take pictures, and share their experience on social media. We entreat them to tell their own story of the site’s visit, which is certainly different from the institutional story.

But they have always been peaceful invasions.

Of course they have. Every visit was, and still is, previously agreed upon. Our regional ambassadors encourage directors of museums and archaeological areas, as well as private citizens, to organize an invasion. Over the years, the quality of the events has improved. We constantly try new actions to engage museum visitors and encourage them to contribute to the promotion of the site’s cultural heritage.
collections with different audiences; no longer simple guided tours, but well-organized events introducing the site visit with an unexpected and creative approach, such as theatre performances, music concerts, games, even food-related experiences. The story of the visit, therefore, is no longer focused only on what visitors see in the museum, but on everything that happens there. Social technologies have also improved: from pictures, to videos, to 3D reconstructions.

As long as they are the result of collective experiences... Digital Invasions have helped people understand that a museum should not necessarily be visited alone and in silence. It can and it should be visited in groups, it can and it should be fun.

I remember the experience of the first year in Perugia, when we took to the museum a group of children equipped with disposable cameras. They took beautiful pictures ‘at a child’s eye level’, and had a great time. They all wanted to repeat the experience. Yes, a museum must be fun. Instead of signs indicating what is forbidden, there should be signs indicating what is allowed. The use of digital tools that we promote is not an end in itself, but has a collective and social purpose. Our invaders do not disengage themselves from the outside world; on the contrary, they live every experience twice by sharing it on the social media.

Even the icon of the Space Invaders that you have adopted, suggests fun and play. How did you choose that icon?

By chance, the first year. Then in the fall we were invited to Marseilles at the International Conference on Digital Heritage, and we brought the Space Invaders with us to emphasize the playful dimension of our Digital Invasions. They have been with us ever since: they are the symbol of our identity, together with the group picture with the ‘Invasion accomplished’ sign, another playful icon.

How has the public evolved over time?

On the first year, most invaders were people from our network, people who worked in the tourism and cultural sectors and were familiar with social media. But soon the circle widened. Because the local press covers and advertises our events regularly, our public includes not only people familiar with technology, but curious visitors as well. And everyone is welcome. Furthermore, over the years we have crossed the national border and now we organize Invasions also in France, Bosnia, Slovenia, Poland, Ireland, Germany, the United States, Australia, Brazil.

How do you support your operations?

We are all volunteers: strategists, ambassadors and organizers as well. Our biggest cost is for website hosting: our busy calendar requires a very complex site. In autumn 2013 we founded a cultural association that organizes events and offers company partnerships in various capacities; we support the website with the association’s proceeds.

What are your expectations for this fifth edition?

I wish for an ever-increasing awareness of the importance of enhancing and promoting events in the cultural heritage sector --and of the necessity to entrust such events to professionals. Many important things have changed since 2013, but we must continue to insist, particularly on having these new professional figures recognized as such. Another aspect that I want to highlight is closely linked to our motto Culture has no Borders: we must tear down not only the walls between culture and people, or between past and present, but also those between cultural institutions, in order to promote collaboration. If a museum does well, other museums should emulate it and perhaps even improve the model by introducing new ideas. There can’t be competition in the promotion of culture, because we all work for the same purpose; namely, to make culture free, open and welcoming. The awareness of this common goal should trigger a mechanism of virtuous competition.
For more on the story

What is PArCo, the Public Archaeology Park

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Abstract

In PArCo, the Community Archeology Park, the archaeologist's job becomes accessible to everyone: here people have fun and spend their free time in touch with archaeologists at work. It is a new model that Archeostorie wants to pilot in the area of Poggio del Molino (Livorno - Tuscany) and that could be replicated in scores in other locations. A true revolution.

Excavations of the area were undertaken in the 1970s and 1980s, and resumed in 2008 under the direction of the Superintendency and the University of Florence. The project's coordinator, Carolina Megale, who is also president of the cultural association Past in Progress, immediately opened the dig to the public: thanks to an agreement between Past in Progress and the American Earthwatch Institute, Carolina regularly welcomes to her dig volunteers who are eager to experience the archaeologist's life. Volunteers' contributions support the excavation works; Carolina has been crowdfunding and crowdsourcing for ten years, and at the same time she has been involving undergraduates and high-school students, starting a school of restoration to repair the villa's mosaics, and keeping the site's doors consistently open to visitors who wish to discover the place. In short, at Poggio del Molino visitors are, and have always been, welcome (De Tommaso, Ghizzani Marcìa & Megale 2010; Megale 2015).

The Community Archaeology Park: the project of Past in Progress and Archeostorie

Now, however, we are willing to raise the bar. First off, we want to equip the area with a dedicated access, signage, benches, an accessible...
path and a reception structure. That is, we want to turn the site into a real park, one that people would actually like to visit and spend time at. The idea actually dates back to the Eighties, when archeologist Riccardo Francovich, together with architects Italo Insolera and Luigi Gazzola, included the archaeological area of Poggio del Molino in the design plan of the Val di Cornia Parks system: it was supposed to be the third archeological area of the System, after the Archaeominerary Park of San Silvestro and the Archaeological Park of Baratti and Populonia (Francovich 1999; Insolera & Romualdi 1988). In order to honor that original project, in 2014 the municipality of Piombino acquired it at great expense.

Poggio del Molino is, hence, public land. As such, it must be made available to everyone as soon as possible. Yet, the archaeological excavations are still ongoing. To overcome this apparent impasse, we have decided to create an archeological and leisure park that will offer activities suitable for everyone, while at the same time keeping the work of the archeologists as its main focus and hardest core. Any visitor will be able to observe the excavation in progress, ask questions, help out in less technical tasks, or even work as a volunteer. In short, this will be an open excavation, a work shared with anyone who visits the Park.

**Between bookworm and Indiana Jones: what the archaeologist does**

It is a very important step forward and, if we really want archaeology to become a true common heritage, we should not be afraid to move in this direction.

We imagine families spending their Sundays or summer vacation days at Poggio del Molino, consistently side by side with the archeologists, gradually discovering each stage of their work. Not everyone knows what an archeologist does. Indeed, we all generally know little about the jobs of others and often ask ourselves: what exactly does a lawyer, a graphic designer or a journalist do all day long? That of the archeologist is one of the least known professions which feeds the strangest fantasies. Not surprisingly, the Archeostorie® project was born two years ago by publishing a book (Dal Maso & Ripanti 2015) that chronicles the daily lives of many archaeologists. The point of the book was to show that archaeologists do not have their minds lost in the distant past, as most people imagine, but on the contrary they work very much inside today’s world, and they deeply affect our society.

When we invite our fellow citizens to spend their Sundays or summer holidays in direct contact with archeologists, we bring them closer to the practice of archeology and inspire love for our past in a new way. Because the past belongs to all of us and those who study it, as archaeologists do, do so on behalf of the community. Their task is to make everyone be aware of the importance of our history and how much the past affects our daily choices. As stated by the Council of Europe Framework Convention on the Value of Cultural Heritage for Society, aka the Faro Convention (Council of Europe 2005), the value of everything, even of history, is determined by citizens: nothing has intrinsic or absolute value.

**Reach out to the past**

There is no better way to appreciate the past, than experiencing it first-hand: touching the piece of pottery that the archaeologist has just brought to light, or the mosaic pavement that is emerging from the earth, or the stone of an ancient mill. Reaching out to the past puts us immediately in touch with the people who used those very objects thousands of years ago. Long and exhausting explanations are not really necessary at first; all it takes is a spark of emotion that immediately triggers an endless series of inquisitive questions, and at that point explanations will make sense, too. This is what a Community Archaeology Park - for us, simply PArCo - is about: it is a revolutionary idea, which we want to test at Poggio del Molino, but nothing prevents from being replicated elsewhere. A place where everyone can spend a fun day outdoors, and reach out to the past.

*Archeostorie is contributing to the PArCo adventure also with a series of historic tales. The first of them, by Mariangela Galatea Vaglio, is available in the Archaeotales section.*
For more on the story


The exhibition opening, on July 15, 2017, was a real triumph. It had been a long-awaited event: the Etruscan Museum of Populonia Gasparri Collection was exhibiting for the first time an exceptional discovery from the Gulf of Baratti (Livorno), occurred only a few months before. News of the discovery had made headlines around the world – also thanks to Archeostorie Magazine’s timely communication.

The exhibition featured the reconstructed burial of a man from the Etruscan period, who was found with chains on his ankles and an iron yoke around his neck. A slave, who not even death could free from his shackles. His body and the reconstructed tomb were placed in a structure created especially for this exhibition by architect Erica Foggi.

Buried in chains among the dunes of Baratti. The discovery of the Man in Chains from Populonia was the title of the exhibition that for almost four months, until November 5th, 2017, has made known the circumstances of the discovery, explained aspects of the depositional process as derived from the context where the man was found, and provided preliminary information on the anthropological investigations carried out by Cristina Cattaneo with her LABANOF Anthropology Lab team of the University of Milan.

The raw reality of ancient slavery

The Man in Chains certainly had a strong visual impact on visitors, but there were other reasons that made the exhibition worth a visit. The pleasant and idealized world of antiquity in general, and of ancient Etruria in particular, which has taken hold of modern and contemporary imagination, vanishes here, and gives way to a harsher and more authentic reality. Visitors are compelled to reflect on the many contradictions, deep inequalities, and ancestral brutality that mark the history of humanity.

The story of the Man in Chains emerged from the quiet and gentle dunes of the Gulf of Baratti, a place almost out of time, ecstatically peaceful, like a slap in the face. It is the story of a man – a foreigner, probably, from the far-away lands of Sub-Saharan Africa, as suggested by preliminary anthropological analysis – who was taken captive and perhaps sentenced to forced labor.

The poor man lived the last part of his life in fetters, restrained by a complex and cruel system of coercion that nobody, neither his jailers nor anyone else in the community, thought to remove even after his death, perhaps perceiving it as totally ‘normal.’

This discovery offers almost unprecedented evidence of the existence of actual slaves in the lower classes of Etruscan society. Latin sources usually mention ‘servants’ and rarely acknowledge the presence of more rigid forms of servitude, but we can get an idea of their
conditions based on the disturbing scenarios of modern slavery.

Ancient sources do not say much about slavery, and the topic seems to be quite unpopular among our contemporaries, too. The Populonia exhibition shed some light on it, and at the same time offered opportunities for drawing comparisons with similar contexts elsewhere.

**The Man in Chains is not alone**

The Populonia exhibition of the Man in Chains has actually marked the beginning of a profitable exchange among scholars interested in similar issues, with the purpose of starting specific projects. To this aim, a small section of the exhibition premiered data from the excavations of the large Roman necropolis of York, in England, carried out by the York Archaeological Trust. Some of the beheaded individuals buried there have rings on their ankles, too; although from a more recent period, the York shackles are exactly the same as those found in Populonia.

**A constant dialogue between archaeology and citizens**

The 2017 exhibition followed the lead of the previous year's data display of the discovery of the House of Seeds in Populonia, made public only four months after the end of the emergency excavation.

Their common aim is building an increasingly intense and constructive dialogue between archaeologists and citizens, as well as establishing a new relation between the territory (with its touristic potential) and the scientific research (with its innovative, often internationally known discoveries). Researches are still carried out in Populonia, as these initiatives proved, often in spite of the limited economic resources available, but just as often with extraordinary results.

*Archeostorie has contributed to the Man in Chains adventure with a tale by Mariangela Galatea Vaglio, available in the Archaeotales section.*

**For more on the story**

Immersive virtual reality: The technology that brings us back to the times of Augustus and Nero

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Abstract

Almost simultaneously, two new proposals of immersive reality allow visitors of Rome to intensely relive the past: at the Ara Pacis and at the Domus Aurea, visitors can virtually take off their modern clothes and step into sandals and togas.

We can call it ‘a dive into the past’. The technology of immersive virtual reality applied to two quintessentially symbolic spaces of ancient Rome allows visitors to experience them just as they were in the old days. At the Ara Pacis Museum, visitors wander around the Field of Mars and then attend the sacrifice of a bull in front of the Ara, mingling among the crowd in religious silence. At the Domus Aurea, one feels just like Nero, strolling through the rooms and gardens of his pavilion, then looking at the Caelian and Palatine hills to admire the Villa in all its magnificence, and finally crying out “Now I can begin to live like a human being”— just as Rome's most megalomaniac Emperor did. These two fully immersive experiences are the result of two site-specific projects of immersive reality.

The Ara as it was, thanks to immersive reality

The Ara as it was special night-visits with VR viewers (designed and built by ETT S.p.A) offer visitors a further opportunity: while the visit in augmented reality to the Ara's outer reliefs remains unchanged, the introduction to the visit (which used to focus only on the two plastic models of the Field of Mars and the Ara), has now become a real immersive 360° show in front of the altar itself. It is a remarkable quality leap: the previous animation of the models left visitors with a sense of unreality, of forgery, while now we live the true reality of the past and the present. Thanks to the combination of the 3D ancient landscape scene with live shots and computer-graphic reconstructions, we truly turn into Romans of the time of Augustus, who in front of the Ara celebrated the Emperor as a victor, and a hero of peace.

Then, when visitors start walking around the Ara to admire the reliefs that virtually reacquire their original colors, their minds are as if fully immersed in the ancient reality and they are ready to imagine themselves as Romans of the past, convinced that finally, thanks to Augustus, the golden age of peace and prosperity is back. Around the Ara, virtual and augmented reality—in alternation—comment on the reliefs, highlighting protagonists and decoration patterns with a selective use of colours. The augmented-reality vision uses a 3D tracking system that makes the experience perfect, with colours and additions that flawlessly overlap with the real reliefs. The warm narrating voices of actors Luca Ward and Manuela Mandracchia make this immersion in the ancient world even more natural. What is missing? Almost nothing now; it is a fantastic visit. It would be great to find a more comfortable way to hold the viewers. For the moment, in fact, visitors have to hold them in their hands, in order to be able to remove them when moving from one location to the next. In
the long run, this is very tiring —only the first show lasts ten minutes— and visitors run the risk of focusing too much on the viewer, losing the sense of immersion.

Total immersion in the Domus Aurea

At the Domus Aurea site, on the other hand, the VR viewers are worn, and the sense of immersion is total. Being only one installation, visitors do not need to bring the viewer along during the visit. It is a less complex proposal and, as such, easier to manage. Technically, there is no 'augmented' reality here, e.g. there is no overlap between real and virtual, but only an immersion in the virtual reconstruction of the Domus. It is an immersion in architecture without living characters. The result is truly unique and powerful, however, and here the virtual reality is even more necessary than at the Ara: at last, despite being underground, visitors will have a sense of how much light used to shine in those rooms. Just as did the painters of the sixteenth century who discovered the Domus’ amazing decorations, visitors now climb down into the Hall of the Golden Vault, where the installation is located. There, the flood of dirt that now buries the Domus Aurea gradually withdraws, the foundation walls of the Trajan Baths —built later above the Domus, thus sealing it— dissolve, and suddenly the dark room begins to shine as the sun hits the marbles and golden coatings. Visitors look around, go out into the large garden and under their eyes the term ‘Golden’ regains all its true meaning. Wonder prevails, maybe the same awe that felt those happy few Romans Nero admitted into the Palace.

A video at the entrance surveys the ancient and modern history of the Domus Aurea. The projection uses an immense wall for its majestic narration, on the same scale as Nero’s own dream. The two stations, designed by KatatexiLux, are part of the guided tours to the restoration site of the Domus. In fact, a truly unprecedented archaeological intervention is taking place: to avoid that water infiltrations, tree roots, and the weight of the earth from the garden above completely destroy the Domus and its frescoes, archaeologists have decided to ‘uncover’ the 16 thousand square meters of buried buildings, protect them with insulating materials, and then cover them back with new greens. It is a titanic, five-year long enterprise, which complements the work of consolidation of the walls and is the essential precondition for the actual restoration of the stucco and frescoes. This time, hopefully, they will not deteriorate in a short time as they did after the extensive restoration carried out for the Jubilee of the year 2000.

Meanwhile, the work on the gardens has led to a series of discoveries that are helping in the reconstruction of the history of the Oppian Hill from antiquity to today, from pre-Domus buildings, to late antique burials and eighteenth-century vineyards and orchards. At the end of the work, therefore, virtual reality will have a new and very long story to tell.

For more on the story

*L’Ara Com’era, The Ara as it Was:*

The project was shortlisted on the Heritage in Motion 2017 multimedia competition:


L’Ara Com’Era is open to the public on Friday and Saturday evening only, from 7.30 pm to 11 pm, and for a maximum of 400 visitors per day. It is open every day during the Holidays and in the Summer months. From its opening in October 2016 until 31 December 2017 the total number of visitors has been 35,312.

**Domus Aurea:**

Visits to the Domus Aurea restoration site are available only on Saturdays and Sundays, from 9.00 am to 4.45 pm (only 75 minutes guided tours, with a maximum 25 people per tour). In 2017 the total number of visitors has been 52,120.
San Giovanni Metro C Station in Rome: An archaeological feast for everyone

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On the opening day, April 2, 2017, the long line at the entrance of the new Metro Line C station revealed that something important was going on down there. Archaeology was on display: actually, it was public archaeology, the one that truly knows how to leave its usual sites and meet people on their daily commute. The San Giovanni station is a veritable exhibition space - a display of both itself and of the items found during construction. An amazing experience, a real 'journey through history' and deep down the Roman underground, as stated in large letters at the turnstiles. Are you ready? Let’s go down.

Descending the station’s stairways is a journey in space and time: the deeper we get, the further back in history we go. In almost 30 meters of stratigraphy we can trace the entire history of the area back to the prehistoric swamps. It is a truly new and unique experience, which makes this Rome station different from any other metro in the world, be it Paris or Athens, Naples or Berlin. A team of architects from La Sapienza University, directed by Andrea Grimaldi and Filippo Lambertucci, has covered all the station walls with glass panels unravelling the story of the place. Different colours are used for the different stages of the journey through time and space, and the history of the site is constantly compared with the larger history of Rome. Too much information, perhaps, but San Giovanni is a popular and busy station, and it may well happen that, by glancing at its captions every day, regular passers-by will eventually remember at least the major historical milestones.

The artifacts are both displayed in cases and reproduced on the panels in larger-than-life images. The ground ('atrium') floor showcases modern pottery items from the 16th century onwards; they belonged to the Hospital of San Giovanni and were thrown there in a dump. There are also fragments of ancient marbles reused in modern buildings. “But what about security?” “How long will the glass cases last?” Questions like these are repeatedly asked, and architect Grimaldi seraphically answers: “Beauty educates people.” The admiration for beauty, and the resulting knowledge, are the best antidote against vandalism. And, at any rate, the area is entirely video-surveilled.

At the lower 'corrispondenza' floor, traces of a farm from the 1st century AD have been discovered, such as a large pool for the collection and redistribution of water with a huge amount of amphorae and pipes. The position of the pool, now obviously destroyed, is clearly marked on the floor, and the artefacts found there are all displayed in the cases. There are many bricks engraved with the inscription ‘TL’, proving that the structure must have been a single agricultural estate. In front of that case, a lady elaborately explains the function and use of the brick stamps in ancient Rome to the
friend who is with her. How wonderful! Other people are attracted by the vases used for plant cuttings, or by the ancient pitchforks, or by the architectural decorations in terracotta. And then everyone, without exceptions, admires rings, coins, a gem, bone and orichalcum objects, and all those organic finds that the marshland has preserved: baskets, a leather sole, an arrowhead still tied to its wooden rod. And then lots of seeds, including peach pits, a plant that arrived in Rome from the East just in the 1st century BC. “Peaches are here” are the words that stand out on a wall; “Let’s hope trains are here soon, too!” comments a man.

Yes, because the Metro Line C trains will reach the San Giovanni station only in fall 2018. They will run 30 meters underground in tunnels at the deepest level, along platforms whose walls are covered by the typical vegetation of the Pleistocene marshes. The purpose of the special opening of April 2017 was that of showing that, after ten years of works and six of delays, the station is there - and it is awesome. The people who attended the inauguration were interested not only in archaeology, but in the station itself. Archeology was the main reason of attraction, though, because the underground of Rome cradles wonderful artifacts even in an area where urban planning was, apparently, poor, and because the evidence of ancient daily life makes us feel close to those long gone. Most importantly, in the San Giovanni station everyone has access to archaeology, even people who are not there to ride the train and so do not go through the turnstiles: there the past fully becomes present daily life, stratigraphy becomes a physical experience more than a cognitive one, and we feel entirely part of the layers of history. Just as we, here at Archeostorie, like it. Long life, therefore, to the San Giovanni station! We look forward to many other metro stations like this one.

For more on the story


Faragola. Destruction and reconstruction of an archaeological site

Giuliano De Felice

Abstract

On the night of September 7th 2017, a fire destroyed the archaeological park of the Roman villa of Faragola (Foggia). It was a severe blow for Italian archaeology: no one had ever imagined that - in the 21st century AD - ashes and destruction could affect our antique beauties. Here, Giuliano De Felice, among the protagonists of the excavation of the villa, tries to reflect on the incident from a distance: how can we reconcile rebuilding the site with preserving the memory of this tragic event?

Destruction

In the morning of September 7th I turned on my phone - as I do every morning - at 7.57 but, instead of starting to delete the usual overnight junk mail, I opened a WhatsApp notification. The message was as laconic as it was brutal: "someone's set fire to the cover of the Faragola villa."

I was only able to truly take in what had happened a few minutes later, with the arrival of the first images of what, with smoking steel and streaks of fire, looked more like a plane crash than an archaeological site.

Words often leave room for hope: is it a prank? a false report? exaggeration? The images certainly did not. I immediately closed my eyes and whilst, for a moment, the violence and devastation faded into darkness, other images, images of a much, much older destruction, started forming in my mind. I saw another site, my very first dig, San Giusto - not too distant from Faragola - investigated in remote 1995, a further and exceptional testimony to a territory - that of the Foggia landscapes - hiding truly unique places and sites.

San Giusto was a vicus with an extraordinary example of a dual church, unusually majestically isolated in a desert of hills sloping towards the Sub-Appennines. Around the middle of the 6th century AD, a fire destroyed one of the two churches, bringing down the mighty roof directly onto the floor mosaics. It was a building of hundreds of square meters, not much different from the area of the cenatio (the dining room) of the Faragola villa. The practical outcome? Iron and ash: under the layers of collapsed walls, in direct contact with the mosaic, there were hundreds of nails, shear pins, brackets and hinges spread everywhere in a dusty, blackish, almost threatening layer.

This is what normally remains of a large wooden ceiling and its carpentry after a fire, whether after a week or 1500 years, in San Giusto as in Faragola. Now, it is certainly not a mystery that archaeologists are used to encountering destruction, collapse, earthquakes, fires during their daily work, and are well aware of the signs that each of these events leave in the stratigraphy.

Ash, rubefaction, collapses, fragments, all are in essence what remains of the violence of the past. Harmless residues, because they are distant, historicized and investigated with professional detachment. Yet, knowledge of and daily encounters with the tragedy and violence of History by no means safeguard archaeologists from the cruel live coverage of the web and social networks, from the pain of seeing and feeling the heat of the flames, the smell of burning, wisps of smoke arising from
the rubble, stones turned red by exposure to heat, marble turned to dust, mosaics exploding into small fragments of blackened tiles. But this time these traces have instantly dragged us all back into History, that same History that we thought we had defeated by turning it into an object of study or immobilising it in a future archaeological park.

**Reconstruction**

Archaeology does not teach us only how to study and analyze traces of life and destruction but also – and especially - how to rebuild. And that means right away, a few days after the fire, it is time to roll up our sleeves: the rubble has already been removed and we are working on the construction site again, starting over. (At San Giusto, instead, church A was permanently abandoned after the fire: no one ever removed the rubble or rebuilt walls or roof). Starting over means not only safeguarding what is left, but also opening the site to the public immediately, as was done on October 5th, 6th and 7th, just one month after the fire.

For archaeologists ‘reconstruction’ is a noble term with a very full and profound significance. It does not involve just putting objects and monuments back together (stuff like ‘restore the former glory’) or choosing what and how to do it, but rather analysing, interpreting and telling the whole story of a site, a landscape, or a context. This will also be done in Faragola by narrating, emphasizing, and musealizing this fire as well. It is important that we show that the fire was not an ending - as it is often the case in archaeological sites - but merely a phase in a longer story.

The archaeologists at work today in Faragola are perfectly aware that while it is their duty to try to restore Faragola using all available means, from restoration to multimedia, it is equally important that this tremendous event, which no one would have wanted to experience, is also not forgotten. It would be wrong to ignore, remove or forget any part of it by cleaning up and restoring the site. The story must be shown and told, because forgetting the destruction would become part of the destruction, possibly its most irreparable side.

Since September 7th 2017 Faragola has irreversibly became a *traumascape*: a place whose value no longer rests only in the remains of a remote Past, but also in its bearing witness to contemporary history: it shows us how violence and destruction are still all around us and how things can become ruins and archaeological artefacts overnight.

Even before the investigators have finished, even before learning what was the cause, the guilty party or the motive, the Faragola fire is, first and foremost, a tremendous but extraordinary lesson of history and life: archaeology and cultural heritage are not the irenic world of beauty, art, admiration and contemplation, but a place in which history takes shape and becomes both memory and future.

**For more on the story**


The Symbola Report and professions in archaeology: What the numbers say

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Abstract

Based on the data from the last Symbola Report on the cultural and creative production system in Italy, what are the job prospects for archaeologists? Which areas should they focus on? Archeostorie analyzes the data.

The general data of the Symbola Report

The value of all these sectors combined is € 89.9 billion ‘pure’ (6% of the country’s wealth). However, according to the Symbola analysis, for every euro produced by SPCC, 1.8 euro (called Multiplier Effect 1.8) is activated in related areas, with tourism as the main beneficiary. Thanks to this effect, the overall value of culture becomes around € 250 billion, representing 16.7% of the total national added value (with a 1.8% increase compared to last year).

The most valuable sector is the creative driven (33.5 billion), followed by the cultural industries (33 billion), creative industries (12.9 billion), performing arts and visual arts (7.2 billion) and, finally, by the conservation and development of historical-artistic heritage (3 billion). All sectors are growing both in their employment rate (increased by 1.5% compared to the previous year) and in terms of added value (which recorded a +1.8%). This growth is stronger, even if only slightly, than the rest of the economy, where average growth was 1.3% and 1.5% respectively. But what can all that mean for us archaeologists?

More areas of interest, more jobs

As we are well aware, the career opportunities for archaeologists are no longer only excavation,
museums or academic research, e.g. professions related only to the study and protection of our archaeological heritage. With the appropriate training, there are job opportunities in the field of communications, the development of apps, software or video games, short films and documentaries; one may become the social media manager of an archaeological area, manage it directly, or even more.

For archaeologists, therefore, there are at least three macro areas of desirable employment: the traditional field of historical-artistic heritage (now employing 53 thousand men and women), the cultural industries as such (with a total of 491 thousand employees, of which almost 268 thousand in publishing and almost 160 thousand in the production of software and video games) and the creative industries (with over 253 thousand, 100 thousand of whom in communications). So job opportunities for our graduates have considerably increased.

The absurdity of the quota system

The idea of implementing a quota system for departments such as Archaeology—as was proposed—is thus senseless, since its graduates are not bound to be absorbed by just one sector. It would, instead, be more reasonable to help them create a formative track toward the ‘new archaeological professions’, as we—the Archeostorie team—have been repeatedly advocating since the publication of our Manual (Dal Maso & Ripanti (eds) 2015).

Greater support would be needed from the university institutions that still today, in many cases, organize their curricula taking into account predominantly the macro sector of the historical-artistic heritage, resisting the exploration of alternative models or at least demanding it to the ‘individual students’ personal initiative.

Archaeology, quality tourism, economic and environmental sustainability

If we then consider the positive impact of culture on tourism (which is the main beneficiary of the multiplier effect), the key role that archaeological sites and museums can play in ensuring sustainable and fair development for the territories should be emphasized. Two factors are at play: on the one hand, the Symbola Report states that about one-third of the national tourist expenditure was triggered by culture. On the other hand, another report, Italians, sustainable tourism and ecotourism of the Univerde Foundation - Ipr marketing (Univerde-IPR Marketing 2017), indicates a steadily growing interest in archaeological sites (including ‘minor’ ones) and historic villages, especially in a particular group of travellers: eco-tourists, who today represent about 18% of the overall population.

This means that visitors to the archaeological sites and museums are not only increasing the downstream production in a territory (activating a part of that one-third of tourist expenditure quoted by Symbola), but that by increasingly respecting the rules of sustainable tourism they are encouraging authentic development from both a social and environmental point of view (for example, by preferring to consume typical and organic products or buying local handicrafts).

Archaeologists will also be interested in job opportunities offered by the tourism sector itself. We must not forget that, for example, some of the objectives of the Strategic Tourism Plan (PST) 2017-2022 (MiBACT 2017) provide for investment over the next five years in order to create digital maps of places of culture, so that such places are properly narrated and tourists may best experience them. Who better than than archaeologists skilled in web communication might take on this task?

Opportunities for the economy of Southern Italy and the Art Bonus

To conclude, archaeological sites and museums can also be essential for the economic recovery of the South. According to the Symbola data, the Southern regions of Italy - rich in archaeological and historical-artistic heritage - are those which benefit less from culture, with only 4.1% of added value, while the Central regions have the greatest advantages.

Whilst specific projects could really make a difference by generating work and economic returns, a greater exploitation of specific tax instruments, such as the Art bonus, could be a unique opportunity to directly involve the public in the protection and development of the ‘minor’ archaeological heritage and to generate affection for places of culture.

According to Symbola, as a result of the Art
Bonus (introduced in 2014), 5,216 patrons have so far donated 123 million euros. But there could be many more.

In short, the numbers of the *I am culture* report are reassuring. They support our conviction that a degree in Archaeology is not as useless as some make it up to be, and our belief that opportunities for our professionals in the various sectors of culture are many and varied, and waiting to be grasped.

**For more on the story**


