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# A MERE ADDITION TO SOMEONE ELSE'S GENEALOGY?

Eleftheria Pappa

## Perceptions of Ancient Cultural Heritage, Public Policy, and Collective Memory in Portugal

### ABSTRACT

Debates on cultural heritage and collective memory emphasize the contested role of archaeology in national narratives to the exclusion of other parameters. Yet, cultural heritage can be made visible or remain invisible for reasons other than (un)conscious ideological preoccupations. The representation of the Phoenician archaeological record in Portugal is used to demonstrate that, despite its detachment from collective memory, the ancient cultural heritage can transcend its distance from the past, attaining significance within the contemporary social milieu. The Portuguese embrace their links with Phoenician cultural heritage, investing in academic research and cultural heritage. The corresponding ancient culture remains an adjunct of the archaeological evidence, researched and publicized, but not as an extension of the 'collective self' of modern society. Shifting this devoid-of-symbolic-meaning archaeological record onto the level of contemporary reality accords it visibility, even as the long-forgotten Phoenician origins of some still practiced traditions remain an unacknowledged, 'invisible' heritage.

**KEYWORDS:** Portugal, Phoenicians, archaeology, Age of Discoveries, cultural heritage

### Introduction

The role and uses of the archaeological record, conceived as cultural heritage, can be charted in many spheres, from identity construction (e.g., Hamilakis 2012b) and appropriation for political ends (Bernbeck 2012; Kotsonas 2015) to post-conflict healing potential (Giblin 2014). More prosaically for our postmodern era that favors ambivalence over certainties, the value of cultural heritage is centered on its knowledge-bearing capacity.

Moving beyond the tropes of modernity requires us to view archaeological sites and cultural heritage as spaces of contemporary cultural production, where archaeological sites, as loci of 'enacted multi-temporality,' are performative spaces of contemporary life, extending beyond the archaeological arena with its own narratives for collective memory (Hamilakis and Theou 2013: 181–82). The function of ancient cultural heritage vis-à-vis collective memory and national narratives thus may reflect the performativity of archaeological sites/antiquities, while also resisting the 'charges' of identity construction, invented traditions, and national narratives that have plagued archaeology.

Here, I illustrate this using as a case study the Phoenician heritage in Portugal. I begin with a 'contrapuntal' perspective, juxtaposing it with attitudes towards cultural heritage in Greece, where the classical past attains a special place in collective memory.

In doing so, I am concerned with how rendering the past relevant to the present can defy essentialistic representations imparted through the weaving of a desired identity, yet without escaping some (unconsciously instilled) invisibility. This will bring into sharper focus different ways of handling the representations of the past that may count as less tainted by stratagems employed for identity construction, thus distancing archaeology from contested collective memories and (national) narratives. On the other hand, the invisibility of cultural heritage in collective memory, which conceals its continuing lingering effects or manifestations in the present, may proceed from time-inflicted social amnesia. The visibility of cultural heritage in social memory is never impartial, even if objectivity is actively sought—if only since collective memory often operates on the level of ‘constructions,’ and on what has been known and ‘remembered,’ often passed from generation to generation, but rarely on remembrances lost and later ‘discovered.’

Far from wishing to ascribe to archaeology anachronistic ideas of essentialistic truths as a safe-keeper of ‘authenticity,’ I reinstate the importance of its methodologies and objectives as a potentially fruitful avenue for the production of knowledge and its use for reflection in the present social context. This may serve to moderate disparaging discourses that trace all legacies of archaeological practices to image-building and underlying ideological fixations or the deployment of political stratagems, consciously or subconsciously. I will begin with a brief discussion on the perception of cultural heritage, tracing its academic ‘lineage’ and discussing its relationship with collective memory. This will be followed by a case study from Greece that illustrates the different uses and perceptions of the ancient cultural heritage in Portugal, its invisibility in contemporary cultural poetics and in national identity narratives, in contrast to policy efforts for increasing its value enhancement in the public sphere, through culture heritage capacity-building initiatives. I then offer an analysis of the elements structuring Portuguese national identity narratives, concluding with a discussion on the parameters that determine the visibility/invisibility of cultural heritage.

## Archaeology as Contested Grounds for Cultural Heritage and Social Memory

A long way has been treaded since the 1980s, when heritage studies began to emerge from within fields such as human geography and anthropology, resulting in an extension of scope and a multiplicity of paradigms (e.g., Tunbridge, Ashworth, and Graham 2013). As a facet of that, the semantic broadening of ‘cultural heritage’ so as to encompass not only the material remains of the past but also intangible aspects (Vecco 2010) ineluctably focused on those social and political aspects of cultural heritage that are invoked in the present. Cultural heritage is constituted by and constitutes collective memory, in turn perceived as the *conscious* act of remembering by social groups or individuals (Wertsch 2002; Wilson 2009). Thus, collective memory, socially and historically situated, has bearings on identity, which is mediated through the utilization of forms of cultural production for the construction of narratives, whether state-controlled or open to manipulation by various social actors. In this sense, collective memory reflects a sense and perception of the past that has a bearing on the present.

At its core, the interest in the socio-politics of archaeology is concerned with the use of the discipline as a tool for hegemonic agendas, be they national or imperial/colonial. In tandem with this debate, reflections on the materiality of ancient cultural heritage and its ‘performative’ aspects led to new ideas on the sociology and/or ethnography of the archaeological practice. Accordingly, the notion of ‘performativity’ of material culture links its ontology with the exercise of power and knowledge relations (Bell 2006). Such approaches seek to adopt a holistic perspective on the way archaeology and material culture are entangled in contemporary social, political, and economic milieux.

As a result of these self-reflexive approaches, the focus has shifted onto the role of archaeology in (ethnic/national/cultural) identity formation and narratives, leading to calls for resistance to hegemonic discourses of imperial, neocolonial, or nationalistic prescriptions (e.g., Meskell 1998; Hamilakis 2005; Hamilakis and Duke 2007; Bernbeck 2008, 2012; Laydon and Rizvi

2010).<sup>1</sup> Archaeology and archaeologists emerge from these discourses as pivotal elements in the active processes of ‘constructing the past’ through the archaeological record. Within this frame, the latter is consequently viewed as inherently resistant to an authentic retrieval of the past.

Such understandings of the role of archaeology and cultural heritage comes into sharp contrast with the ‘received wisdom’ of many practitioners entrusted with bringing the past into the present. In the more commonly shared view of the archaeologists, the ‘construction of the past’ involves state-programmatic ideologies (e.g., in cases of imperial or fascist regimes) or subtle forgings of national identity by the state apparatus. This view implicitly considers such attempts at ‘constructing the past’ as mere misappropriation and misuse of an inherently *neutral* archaeological record that constitutes part of the cultural heritage. By contrast, for Hamilakis and Yalouri (1999) this “positivistic approach” is an illusion that does not account for the complex ways in which specific views of the past are internalized and appropriated within a shared national discourse, creating a space for collective memory whose performativity is enacted in aspects of daily cultural life. From this perspective, archaeologists are viewed as (unconscious) actors in the weaving of various identity narratives. An analysis of this subtle use of appropriation of cultural heritage has been discussed recently by Kotsonas (2015), in the context of museum exhibitions. Thus, debunking the idea that one-dimensional theorizations or ‘manipulations’ of historical realities aim always at concrete economic or political benefit requires a more nuanced approach.

Recent studies (Ó Riagáin and Nicolae Popa 2012) have focused on the use of the past in the construction of national identity, both as brief, state-sponsored affairs and as phenomena of a broader time-span and complexity that permeate the identity of a social group. In either case, these attempts often result in empathic perceptions of the past, whereby the *archaeological record* becomes *cultural heritage* which is perceived as embodied *ancestral relics*, forming nodes of a long genealogy: the remains of ‘our ancestors.’ Such attitudes reverberate with geographically and culturally different

social groups, whose internalization of these discourses generates their production and redeployment in various social contexts.

These views on cultural heritage find correspondence in recent analyses of social memory, which are concerned with the *modus operandi* of its mediation, the way it results in narratives produced by the state and institutions, their consumption and reproduction by individuals, as well as its relation to history and morality (Wilson 2009). Yet the terms ‘social memory’ and ‘collective memory’ remain ill-defined,<sup>2</sup> while the relationship between individual and collective remembering is fraught with difficulty. According to Wertsch (2002), the folding of cultural forms and social actors is best defined by seeing narratives as tools that can be used to organize or restructure a version of the past. The subjectivity and thus lack of neutrality of the various cultural forms employed so as to disburse and perpetuate collective memory is inextricably linked with issues of representation, through which identity is mediated. Collective memory is considered weak if not reinforced, publicized, and performed through various means and structures. For example, education provides one of the contested political spaces in which collective memory can be performed (e.g., DiGiacomo 2008: 103).

A derivative aspect of this absence of neutrality of collective/social memory is the need to examine the moral standpoints related to it and its means of reproduction. For Blustein (2008), social memory entails taking responsibility for the past. This does not translate into an (false) admittance of guilt for acts perpetrated by different generations of people, but into assuming responsibility that advances social justice in the present. Here, Blustein is obviously concerned with ‘wrongdoing’ in the sense of acts of injustice that can be described as such by current ethical norms and legal frameworks. Such delineations of the ethical standpoints on which collective memory narratives hinge, present limited possibilities for premodern periods. In the case of collective memory vis-à-vis these earlier periods of time, the focus should be on the enhancement of understanding the historical process through the disciplines of archaeology and ancient history, rather than on

delineations of 'wrong-doing' (the evaluation of which by our contemporary moral and legal standards would be problematic).

This way we return full circle to the earlier argument about the absence of neutrality of the archaeological record, its inherent subjectivity. This enables construction of cultural heritage through the *production* of the archaeological record and its subsequent embeddedness in identity narratives. The selective process of excavation, recording, cataloging, and interpretation, all of which constitute methodologies of a 'western' discipline, are not mere avenues towards the recovery of a neutral past, a source of unadulterated knowledge, but processes of cultural production (Hamilakis 2012b: 38–39) or even colonization, as perceived by social actors (Plantzos 2014). Such an inflection on the profession and methodology of archaeology subsequently requires the identification of the producer of the form of knowledge, of the wider social context in which this knowledge is produced, and of the way the final product is re-uptaken and often reconstituted (e.g., as the basis for identity construction). This (postmodern) approach places the onus not only on archaeologists, but on the entire social context for decoding the 'knowledge' mediated through the practitioners of ancient cultural heritage. Others suggest an explicit democratization of the representation of the past, whereby various stakeholders are entasked with its representation (e.g., Holtorf 2007: 157–61).

The resultant meandering debates of conscious and unconscious uses of cultural heritage may be vexing to some practitioners in the field. For those archaeologists who work on the day-to-day excavation and publishing of sites and/or on periods and countries with which they have no formal (ethnic/national) links, it may become a source of dismay to be subjected to charges of 'constructions' of the past. To the chagrin of others, the debate may sound explicitly belittling of their efforts and even their profession. Pertinently though, the quagmire of deconstructing the socio-politics of archaeology and cultural heritage have broader, far-reaching ethical dimensions. For example, in his deconstruction of the 'national imaginary' and 'invented'

traditions of modern Greece, Hamilakis (2012b: 46–48) has drawn attention to the political naïveté and lack of social responsibility in deconstructing narratives without the necessary deliberation, without the objectifying position of taking into account the ethical and political effects and results.

While neutrality towards the understanding and representation of the past can never be (fully) achieved, it would be ill-conceived to consider every aspect of representing the past on the basis of the archaeological record as tainted with conscious undertakings of building narratives. Subjectivity is ineluctably introduced in generating interpretations of the past, which are produced by sentient beings within a specific socio-cultural context—with a given knowledge of the world. 'Getting out' of our human nature and social environment to 'objectively' witness the ancient past will always fail against the impossibility of such an endeavor. Yet our theoretical preoccupations with interpretation are constantly taking steps towards redressing the balances and minimizing the biases (e.g., Fahlander 2004), and this is part of the scientific process. Our research and views are always subjected to critical thinking and to the knowledge produced by new developments in the field, including new evidence.

### **Visibility and Invisibility of Cultural Heritage in Collective Memory and National Identity Narratives: A Contrapuntal Perspective**

Far from being unencumbered by self-questioning regarding the use of a malleable past, most Greeks' main concern regarding ancient cultural heritage revolves around the interstitial locus between the pulling forces of protection-exhibition of ancient remains on the one hand, and of technological/urban expansion at the expense of antiquities on the other. Yet the use of the ancient past in modern Greece as a 'symbolic capital' and an 'authoritative discourse' has formed the core of a well-known debate from within and outside Greece (Karakasidou 1994; Hamilakis and Yalouri 1996, 1999; Hamilakis 2012b; Kotsonas 2012).



The point of contention is what is referred to as the 'national myth',<sup>3</sup> the product of enmeshing the desires, objectives and agendas of national, imperial and colonial archaeologies with a western-centric, teleological view of European history between the eighteenth and early twentieth centuries (Hamilakis 2012b). Although the origins of this national discourse are not the scope of this article, it is interesting to note that many attribute a collective amnesia of the more recent Byzantine past to the nineteenth-century intelligentsia involved in the ideological framing of *ethnogenesis*. The emphasis on the classical antiquity seemed more suitable to the socio-political objectives of the nascent Hellenic state, than the image of the pluri-ethnic imperial state that the Byzantine past would connote (Hamilakis and Yalouri 1996: 123).<sup>4</sup>

The modern Greek national discourse on classical antiquity should not be envisaged as a sterile, top-down programmatic ideology, but rather as a main element through which national identity came to be formed, internalized by the individuals forming the citizen body and subsequently perpetuated and embodied in successive appropriations and reifications of this 'national myth' by various social actors. Its success was predicated on its penetration across different social and economic classes, its rendering as a 'sacrosanct' paradigm in modern Greek mentality. In contemporary Greece, images relating to the ancient past, reconstructions and projections into the present have been utilized in various ways by state authorities, for example, in advertising campaigns by the National Organization for Tourism or in the publicity and staging of the Olympics in Athens in 2004 (Hamilakis 2012b: 27–29). Far from showing a strictly conscious act of imposing a specific self-perception on the individuals forming the nation, these demonstrate an internalization of the discourse by the citizen body, which is strategically reproduced in the decisions of the authorities, staffed by individuals who come from within the citizen body. Nevertheless, the internalization is best illustrated with a rudimentary example of daily 'cultural poetics': the recent reaction to the intended reburial of the Altar of the Twelve Gods in Athens.

News between 2011 and 2012 were flooded with the issue of the reburial of the Altar of the Twelve Gods, an important monument in the ancient Athenian Agora, now located in the historic center of the capital. Commissioned by Peisistratos the Younger in 522/521 BCE, it was conceptualized as the heart of the ancient city and a milestone, from which all distances were measured. According to Thucydides, it was located in front of the Stoa of Zeus Eleftherios and consisted of a quadrilateral *peribolos*. The monument was renowned in antiquity as an asylum for those seeking protection from vigilante justice for (alleged) wrongdoing. Partly excavated in 1891 by Wilhelm Dörpfeld during the opening of the 'Metropolitan Railway,' it was only identified as the Altar of the Twelve Gods in 1934 by the American School of Classical Studies, on the basis of an inscribed marble statue base found near it (Camp 2003: 4–5). In 1946 and 1989, further archaeological works were carried out on the stratigraphy of the south end of the altar and its surrounding area, but in the excavation reports of the Agora it is clearly stated that knowledge of the monument remained partial, pending its full excavation (e.g., Camp 2003: 8).

Its recent 'rediscovery' during renovation works of the electric train line (the successor to the Metropolitan Railway) in the areas of Monastiraki and Theseio (Fig. 1) was at a point where the train track intersects the visible ancient Agora remains. The discovery caused a lot of controversy, since the state-owned operator of this line lacked the financial resources to allow its excavation by realigning that crucial track segment. On the other hand, it is the convention of archaeological practice in Greece not to rebury important finds after discovery. To those opposing the undisturbed continuation of the electric train line renovation works, the 'burying' of the altar would create an ugly precedent, by allowing the state and other stakeholders to evade the responsibility of excavation and preservation of cultural heritage, leaving it for 'future generations.' Newspaper articles, petitions using social media and actual demonstrations were used to counter this decision.<sup>5</sup>



FIG. 1  
The electric train line intersecting the Agora, Thesseio, Athens. (Photo by E. Pappa.)

The protests resulted in the stalling of the operations in the renovation of that particular, very busy train line segment, with hours lost for commuters, who had to tolerate substantial delays on a daily basis for weeks. But why were people so opposed to its reburial? Why be opposed to the reburial of an altar when central Athens itself could be conceptualized as an extensive archaeological site, with monuments and remains scattered across the modern city? The intensity of opposition generated by this incident is directly related to the altar considered to be part of modern Greek heritage, the relic of 'our ancestors' in the eyes of many Greek people. And since it was made, used, and discussed by 'our ancestors,' then it is part of 'our heritage,' 'our duty and pride' to preserve. It is precisely this unself-conscious linkage with the past (for some genealogical, for others spiritual) that stirs up

opposition even from outside the archaeological and cultural heritage ranks. The 'spiritual' connection can refer to many factors that would result in continuity, from the received cultural heritage to the impact of the landscape on the psychosynthesis of the nation.<sup>6</sup>

The internalization of this sacrosanct discourse results in a situation where social actors from within the citizen body can draw on the ancient past according to the needs of their times, often competing with the state, another promulgator of ancient Greece as symbolic capital and authoritative resource. As previously observed (Hamilakis and Yalouri 1996: 121), this demonstrates that the ancient past in modern Greece forms a powerful cache of resources from which to draw on so as to express authoritative power and high moral point in the present. This is not limited to using examples or analogies with the past, but as the reaction to

the reburial of the altar shows, it extends to respecting the 'sacredness' of the material remains of the past.

The ancient past (mainly classical antiquity, but also the pre-classical era, e.g., Minoan) forms a potent discourse in the social present in Greece and is so woven into daily life that historical figures, mythology, events, and cultural traits from the ancient past are casually evoked daily, running through collective memory, alive with meaning and embedded in the national consciousness as a constituent element of *being* Greek today. This is fueled by the interplay of physical environment and education through pedagogical structures, where history and archaeology are taught in a chronological continuum from the early grades of elementary school (e.g., Simandiraki 2004), and where the ubiquitous relics of the past are visible in many places today. In effect, the ancient Greek past is a central tenet in the shared discourse on national identity, because of its perceived unbroken continuity with the present. This results in a sacrosanct paradigm where ancient past and archaeology in modern Greece are intertwined in national identity perception and projection (Hamilakis 2012b).

Would the discovery of a Phoenician altar in Lisbon create such a discourse and in actuality, civic obstruction? It is most unlikely. Yet Greece is far from being unique in construing the ancient past as a central tenet in the discourses on national identity. Such transfigurations are common in collective memory, as "the past is a surprisingly flexible symbolic resource, one that is constantly being reinterpreted to meet the needs of the present" (Pi-Sunyer 2008: 155). For example, in nineteenth- and early twentieth-century linguistically-, religiously- and ethnically-fragmented Lebanon, the 'Phoenician past' of the Lebanese territory, until then acknowledged as a historical fact, provided a contested identity to social groups of the coast, who envisioned the attainment of their independence and the shaping of the nascent state along 'western' trajectories, thus creating division lines with communities emphasizing their Arab roots and culture (e.g., Kaufman 2004). In contemporary Portugal, however, similar Phoenician sentiments would not penetrate the narratives of collective memory, much less as a desirable trait.

When H. Lautensach was writing in his 'geography' of Portugal, published in 1932, that "the coastal fishermen are certainly [...] descendants of the ancient Phoenicians – an

old, old race" (Jefferson 1933: 344), he was pre-empting archaeological/historical interest in the Phoenician past of Portugal by over half a century. But he was also reflecting the nineteenth- and twentieth-century Portuguese national discourses on the origins and ethnic psychology of the 'national soul,' purported to be both "distinctive" and "variegated" (Medeiros 2008; Roseman and Parkhurst 2008). According to these discourses, various people were considered to have left their imprint on the Portuguese nation, ethno-historically seen from the lens of a north-south divide, which acquired racist overtones with a presumed 'Celtic/Aryan' element (Celts, Romans, Visigoths) in the north and a 'Semitic' one (Phoenicians, Arabs) in the south (Sobral 2008).

From the seventeenth century onwards, the declining Portuguese Empire and increased poverty led to introversion, a period that sharply contrasted with the previous two centuries of the *Os Descobrimentos* (The Age of the Discoveries) that marked a landmark phase during which Portugal extended overseas with the annexation of territories in four continents. The early twentieth-century totalitarianism of the *Estado Novo's* motto "orgulhosamente sós" ("we are alone and proud") succinctly sums up the repression and intended isolation of Portugal, an enforced ideology of traditionalism, whose opposite mirror image is reflected in the post-Revolution "a Europa conosco" ("Europe is with us") of the 1980s (Sapega 1997: 168–69). It was only then possible that Phoenicians would again resurface in historical accounts of the country. Their presence in south-central Portugal by the ninth century BCE, as part of a commercial-colonial process stretching across the Mediterranean, has been archaeologically documented over the past three decades (e.g., Maia 2000; Arruda 2002), with the discovery and exploration of archaeological sites, followed by the study and musealization of finds and the opening of exhibitions. Despite the measures taken both for the promotion and protection of this part of the archaeological heritage, the idea that the Phoenician past would permeate discourses on national identity would be perceived as a mirthful absurdity.

Could we then speak of a more 'neutral' or objective (and not objectifying) approach to a country's past as a case for the rejection of empathic national narratives that embody a performative power in the present? Let us begin with exploring the role of the Phoenician cultural



heritage in modern Portugal, from the perspective of the position it occupies within modern social and physical settings, mediated though public policy and daily life, before juxtaposing it with national-identity narratives.

## Public Policy for Cultural Heritage: Visibility as Preservation and Promotion

### *Phoenician Culture in Academic Research, Heritage Policy, and Public Archaeology*

After a long period of dormancy in academic research, catalyzed by the suppression and isolation of the Salazar era (1932–1968), archaeological research experienced a boom in the late 1970s and 1980s, entailing both methodological innovations and an actual increase in excavations, which had a particularly beneficiary result for the study of the Iron Age of the country, including the Phoenician period (Arruda 2008: 13–14). Portuguese and foreign scholars invested in excavating, studying and publishing sites and their material culture in monographs, edited volumes, and journals, thus bringing to light a period archaeologically almost completely unknown until then.

Concurrently, EU, state, and non-profit initiatives in cultural heritage policy allowed for the protection and promotion of archaeological sites connected to the Phoenicians. Portugal subscribes to the various Council of Europe conventions regarding the protection of archaeological heritage. It was the second western European country to ratify the UNESCO 2001 Convention on the Protection of the Underwater Cultural Heritage (Alves 2010). Supra-state initiatives resulted in the promotion of Phoenician heritage through educational structures. For example, two of the Council of Europe 'Cultural Routes' referred to the Portuguese Phoenician heritage either explicitly or indirectly. The 'Phoenicians' Route' of 2003 was an international 'Cultural Itinerary of the Council of Europe,' passing through three continents, 18 countries and 80 towns of Phoenician origins. Similarly, in 2005, 'The Routes of the Olive Tree' were inaugurated to reflect on the olive tree heritage and to promote sustainable development. Portugal was one of the participating countries, due to its olive cultivation heritage, a contribution of the Phoenicians, who introduced the domesticated olive to the Iberian Peninsula (Buxó 2008).

The National Heritage Policy of the country is comprehensive, aiming at the identification and the protection of cultural heritage but also paying attention to the accessibility and dissemination of information. Integrated management of cultural heritage includes policies of decentralization and public contracts. The main body for cultural heritage management is the Directorate-General for Cultural Heritage (DGPC).<sup>7</sup> In cooperation with local authorities (on the level of districts/municipalities), with churches and with private companies, it implements the identification, recovery, and management of cultural heritage. Within this framework, the Phoenician/Iron Age past of the country has received attention, in terms of identification, excavations and protection, reflected in the burgeoning number of archaeological sites that have emerged in the past 20 years. More exceptionally, within the past decade a pioneering program on the digitization of the archaeological heritage developed geodatabases of the historical and cultural heritage (e.g., the construction of a GIS database: 'Inventing and Digitizing the Historical and Cultural Heritage') with sites and projects that can be used for archaeological planning, management, and research. This national inventory on the tangible cultural heritage was complemented by the development of the *Matriz*, a national digital database of Portuguese Museums, which allows online access to their collections. This degree of concern for heritage policy and management takes a holistic view of the past, without privileging one era over another. As an effect, the Phoenician tangible heritage is accorded visibility and accessibility, as a segment of a succession of cultures and cultural groups that emerged in what is now territorially Portugal.

Various public bodies are bestowed with the strategic aims of heritage education, achieved through public education and cultural and pedagogical initiatives, including programs related to the exploration of monuments. In recent years, such events have been organized by various collaborating departments within the state administration.<sup>8</sup> As with public policy heritage, the perspective adopted is holistic, according visibility to the ancient, medieval, and modern eras.

Within this context, the Phoenician heritage again emerges as part of the history of Portugal. For example, the temporary museum exhibition *Exposição. Tavira, patrimónios do mar* ('Exhibition. Tavira, Legacies of the Sea')

inaugurated on October 23, 2008 at the municipal museum of Tavira (Faro District), traced the heritage of the sea and the ocean in the history and life of the city from prehistoric times to the modern era, utilizing not only artifacts, but also reconstructions and multimedia to engage the visitor (Fig. 2). Interspersed with viewing galleries of artifacts and short films on the life of historic fishing communities was the three-dimensional *maquette* of the ancient Phoenician town. On February 28 of the following year, guided walks in

the context of *Passeios Tavira, Patrimónios do Mar* ('Routes Tavira, Legacies of the Sea') began with the *Tavira fenícia e turdetana: das maquetas da exposição*, a presentation of the Phoenician and later Iron Age period ports of Tavira (Queiroz 2008), aiming at public education. Municipal activities include the education of the public on the archaeology of the city by strategically placing panels with information and drawings on the reconstructed archaeological remains throughout the town, illustrating the Phoenician past of



FIG. 2  
Poster of the  
exhibition "Tavira,  
patrimónios do mar."  
(Reproduced with  
the permission of the  
Museu Municipal de  
Tavira.)



the city. School visits to the historical center of the city as well as to the medieval castle take place in the summers, guided by archaeologists from the local municipal archaeological service. Thus children are given the opportunity to explore the contemporary topography of their city vis-à-vis the ancient landscape, which has changed dramatically in the once-coastal town.

Further, non-profit initiatives have enhanced the possibilities of public education, through the foundation of cultural-historical and archaeological societies that seek to preserve and enhance the cultural heritage record and learning, e.g., the cultural heritage initiative *Campo Arqueológico de Tavira*, which brought to light and to the public, including via the digital domain, the Phoenician archaeological evidence discovered in the city (Maia 2000).

### *Musealization and Integration of Phoenician Archaeological Sites: Case Studies*

The incorporation of the tangible Phoenician heritage in contemporary physical and social settings illustrates the

importance accorded to its visibility. In the capital city Lisbon, the integration of various archaeological remains connected to the Phoenician past within the modern fabric of the city provides a good example. Such archaeological remains have been found in various locations across the city, for example, Castillo de San Jorge; cloister of the Cathedral (Sé de Lisboa); Calle de Augusta; Teatro Romano. Inside the cloister of the city's Sé Cathedral, in the heart of the city, the multi-period site is open to the visitors, having incorporated the ancient and medieval past into its physical and social setting as a church and as a focal point of tourist attraction (Fernandes 1996). In the Baixa district, parts of Phoenician structures and a Punic necropolis on the edge of the former shoreline of the Tagus estuary, are preserved *in situ* under the Millennium BCP bank building, in an underground exhibition space that also houses a museum, with daily guided visits. Across central Lisbon, on the opposite shoreline of the Tagus, the small Museu Naval in Almada, located on the river bank (Fig. 3), exhibits finds from the Phoenician *emporion* of Quinta do Almaraz, excavated upon the steep crags that rise from the coast.



FIG. 3  
Exhibition of Phoenician Red-Slip and other ceramics from Quinta do Almaraz at the Museu de Arqueologia e História (Almada).  
(Courtesy of the Divisão de Museus, C. M. Almada.)

These cases from the Metropolitan area of Lisbon are far from unique. Another case of the integration of Phoenician archaeological remains into the modern urban and social fabric is observed in Alcácer do Sal (Setúbal District). The Phoenician-period remains were excavated within and under the medieval castle built on a hill, overlooking the town and the river Sado. Excavations revealed multiple periods of occupations. The medieval castle has been converted into a *pousada* (a luxury hotel), while much of the Phoenician-period, Roman, and medieval levels excavated underneath it are now exhibited in a museum built over the finds in situ. This accords them visibility and accessibility in the most prominent part of the town. Located in an area where a church and a hotel are also situated, the exhibited remains lie in a prominent part of town and are inextricably linked to its everyday physical milieu (Barata 2007).

Similarly, in Tavira the planned (and announced) Phoenician Museological Nucleus project aims to integrate in a museological nucleus the Phoenician-period structures excavated at the historic center of the town. Phoenician remains pertaining to a sanctuary, monumental constructions, and a fortification wall (Maia 2000), as well as a necropolis (Arruda, Covaneiro, and Cavaco 2008) were found in the heart of the city. They were located on the hill of Santa Maria, with some of the ancient structures lying under the municipal museum (Palácio da Galeria), a neighboring hotel pension (Maia 2000), and a monastery converted into a hotel (*pousada*).

In 2010, the municipality proposed to open a public competition for the implementation of the project for the Phoenician Museological Nucleus, covering an approximate area of 1640 m<sup>2</sup> (which has been stalled since, due to the economic crisis). The objectives of the project are to safeguard the ancient remains and to allow the development of the museological program. Within the general scope of the project is the preservation and exhibition of the Phoenician remains. Their musealization will include the construction of viewing galleries on four levels corresponding to different strata of the excavated sites, along with that of auxiliary spaces. The spatial articulation of the project also envisions the creation of a poly-cellular museum

nucleus, by connecting the latter to Palácio da Galeria, so that the visitors could start their walk from the present museum. As stated in the announcement of the competition by the public authorities, such a nucleus has “a historical and symbolic relevance” for no other reason than setting an example for the “intervention of its diverse monumental aspects, architectural and museological.”<sup>9</sup> There is no reference to, nor implication of, ancestral linkage to that past. Nor of spiritual connection. The ‘symbolic relevance’ is strictly confined to the technical aspects of museological strategies. This clear demarcation of the symbolic dimension of the ancient past is not merely present in the public intentions of state authorities. Rather, it reflects a socially wider understanding of the ancient past as something implicitly relevant to the present, worth preserving ‘as global heritage that belongs to us all’ (hence the policies developed to promote it), but temporally and physically ‘bounded’: it can offer an objective outlook to a land’s past rather than to a specific people’s past. Visitors to the municipal museum enter through a patio where the Phoenician-period structures are exhibited under glass floors. Thus, every visitor to the modern art/historical museum comes inadvertently into contact with archaeological remains. Some of them may ask about what it is that they are seeing and be told that the structures date from the Phoenician period of settlement. Few, if anyone, however, would be able to produce a narrative in which ‘Phoenician’ would be meaningful to the identity of Portugal, much less to the self-representation of the Portuguese today.

### Tracing the Lingering Yet Invisible Phoenician Heritage

For all these efforts to promote the Phoenician past, crucial aspects of the Phoenician intangible cultural heritage remain ‘invisible’ in contemporary everyday social life and unacknowledged in contemporary historical research. At least one of the main trading and urban cities of Portugal, Lisbon, emerged out of Phoenician/Punic trading activities (de Matos 1994). Apart from reorganizing existing towns, the Phoenicians



introduced new material culture, technology, and crops that developed into some of the socio-economic activities that came to define early modern Portugal, seeping into narratives of the national character. For example, olive cultivation is considered paramount to the Portuguese diet, especially in the south where the olive groves flourish due to optimal climatic conditions. That the domesticated olive was introduced in Iberia by the Phoenicians (Buxó 2008) is easily forgotten when evaluating the role of the olive and its products as a staple in the 'Mediterranean diet.' Similarly, the wine industry played too a significant economic role during the declining period of the Portuguese Empire, with the floruit of the production beginning in the late seventeenth century in Porto. From there the wine was shipped to be sold to the Dutch and later to the British. In the eighteenth century, wine was the only export commodity of the Portuguese Empire that was not produced in the colonies (Bennett 1990).<sup>10</sup> And yet, few would consider that the main agricultural production bases of early modern Portugal or its dietary staples were the result of the Phoenicians who settled in Iberia at the beginning of the first millennium BCE.<sup>11</sup>

Another defining socio-economic activity in historic times was the sea salt exploitation and the salting of fish. As the ship crews of the expanding fifteenth- to sixteenth-century exploration movement needed preserved food stocks for the long voyages, the market for such products grew, and with that the production of salt, to the extent that Portugal was hailed as one of the historically major salt-producing countries of the globe. This prompted António Sérgio to state in the first part of the twentieth century that salt exploitation, fishing, and maritime commerce were more significant for Portugal than agriculture (Sluiter 1952). The salted cod, *bacalhão*, is considered the most typical of Portuguese dishes, a trope that along with the Age of the Discoveries "engender[s] everyday discourses" (Leal 2000: 282; Neves 2004b). Salt-pans were traditionally found in lowland, coastal areas, around the Guadiana, the Sado and the Mondego rivers and their tributaries. The industry severely declined over the last centuries, but it has recently seen revival efforts due to its environmental and cultural heritage value (Amaral

and Costa 1999: 327; Neves et al. 2004), with several now operating on the Portuguese coast, e.g., around Figuera da Foz (Neves 2004a).

Sea salt exploitation and fish preservation developed among the Phoenician colonists of the south-central coastal lowlands of Iberia (Arruda 2009: 124). By the Punic period (from the sixth century BCE onwards), the consumption of various fish species and their processing for sauces and pastes (e.g., *garum*) developed into an important economic activity involving popular dietary staples, well-documented by vat installations excavated across the southern Iberian Peninsula and Morocco. By the Roman period, an "enormous number" of such fish-salting/sauce-producing installations dotted the so-called Lusitanian coast of Portugal, the remains of which can still be seen today (Teichner and Pons Pujol 2008: 304). The development of salt-pans and fishing went hand-in-hand, as the preservation of fish necessitated salt as the main preservative ingredient. This flourishing economic activity involved exports stretching from the Atlantic to the other end of the Mediterranean, and to the northern Roman provinces, in what is now northwestern Germany and the British Isles (Trakadas 2005). Such fish products, especially *garum*, were so famous that references to it were made in Attic plays, as in Athenaeus' *Deipnosophistai* from the third century CE (Trakadas 2005). Although such centrally organized activities came to an end in the fourth century CE, what was lost was the state-organized form of production and trade. These activities continued as a marginal form of production in rural societies through the Moorish period, as it has been documented for southern Spain (Malpica Cuello 2011).

Is it then by extreme coincidence or a form of environmental determinism that the salted fish preservation, a prerequisite for the economic expansion of the salt-pans and the fishing industry, reemerged as an important economic activity in late medieval and early modern Portugal (Amorim 2011)? More likely, an ailing, small-scale tradition of exploitation survived from late antiquity to the medieval period (fourth to tenth centuries), when its existence is documented in royal charters. Rau (1951) traces the development

of medieval salt exploitation in northern Portugal to charters of the first half of the tenth century, referring to such activities in the Minho and Douro rivers. Interestingly, these are regions not so much favored for such activities by the prevailing climatic conditions, which underlines just how widespread these activities may have been in the south of the country during the same period. Given that southern Portugal at the time was under Moorish dominion, relevant archival sources are much harder to collect nowadays, but non-centralized forms of salt production have been documented in contemporary southern Spain, also under Moorish dominion (Malpica Cuello 2011). As a result, it can be stated that the tradition of the fish preservation industry of the fifteenth century can be traced back at least to the tenth century. The lack of records attesting to continuity between the end of the fourth and the tenth centuries amount then to nothing more than lack of extant documentation—especially given the precedent of over 700 years documented salt-pans and fish-preservation activities on the Portuguese coastal lowlands dating from the Phoenician/Punic period to the tenth century CE and the subsequent early modern floruit. Continuity of activities from the Phoenician/Punic period is more likely than a double break (in late antiquity and in the late medieval period) in a highly specialized industry and subsequent revival from scratch.

On the other hand, remnants of Phoenician intangible heritage in the form of circulating myths, legends, and cosmologies can be detected as late as the medieval period. The Roman conquest did not entail the disappearance of all preexisting myths, traditions, and customs. Vestiges of Phoenician mythological narratives were crystallized in medieval Iberian art and literature, the reinterpretations of the ancient myths functioning as moral allegories. This demonstrates the circulation of Phoenician myths in Iberia for centuries after the Roman conquest, albeit with modifications. Indicatively, the Moorish geographer Muhammad al-Idrisi, born in the last decades of the eleventh century in Spain, transmitted in his geographical opus the myth of the *kabirim*, a story of adventurous sailors (Matesanz Gascón 2002). In the ancient Near Eastern

cosmology, as transmitted by Philo of Byblos (first to second century CE) in his *Phoenician History*, the *kabirim* were divine siblings to whom the city of Beirut was bequeathed. This work purportedly drew on a much earlier source of ca. 1000 BCE. The mystery cults of the ‘Great Gods’ Kabeiroi, found in certain regions of archaic/classical Greece (Samothrace, Lemnos, Boiotia) originated in the Near Eastern/Phoenician realm (Hemberg 1950),<sup>12</sup> reaching Iberia centuries later through oral transmission via Phoenician sailors/merchants. In al-Idrisi’s work, the *kabirim* are mortal brothers, whose voyage was still remembered in medieval twelfth-century Lisbon, where a street bore the name *Los Aventureros* (the Adventurers) during the author’s time. By comparison with the documentation for the cults of the Kabeiroi in Samothrace, Matesanz Gascón (2002) postulated that the reference to the ‘adventures’ in the name of that attested street was an allusion to the various processions that would have taken place during the cult festival venerating the *kabirim*, transplanted to the Portuguese coasts by the ancient Phoenicians. Thus, al-Idrisi’s story of the adventurous sailors seems likely connected to the ancient Phoenician myth, crystallized in Philo’s work, and surviving through transmutations down to the medieval period in Iberia in the form of legendary myths.

### **Adventureness, the Deterritorialized Nation and the Post-Colonial Recoil: Topoi in National Identity Narratives**

#### *The Golden Age as ‘Adventureness’ and Saudade as Nostalgia*

In many scholarly studies, the ‘adventureness’ of the Golden Age functions as a discursive, nodal point for the self-perception of the Portuguese, lying in a selective process of collective memory. For Leal (2008: 46), the phrase “We are small but once we were great” encapsulates the Portuguese national narrative. Drawing on the *problematik* of ‘memory maladies’ in nineteenth-century France, Roth (1989: 46, 65) has shown that the past can be analyzed, placed in order and revisited by actors

employing *amnesia*, *hypermnnesia*, and *periodic amnesia* in a dialectic relationship between normality and memory. Public emphasis on the process of collective/social memory reflects how a culture “projects its anxieties about repetition, change, representation, authenticity, and identity.” Leal (2008: 46) argues that this is observed with respect to the Age of the Discoveries, with almost a fixation of the collective memory on this historical period, a form of *hypermnnesia*. Putatively, narratives on Portuguese national identity are anchored on this past ‘glorious era,’ which perforates public and private discourses on the topic.

The mental forces that shaped the self-perception of the national ‘imagined community’ are fixed upon specific and selective historical events and conditions. The formation of the Kingdom of Portugal by Alfonso Henriques in the early twelfth century is hailed as the emergence of the country, considered one of the oldest surviving continuous nations in Europe. By the fifteenth century, much earlier by European standards, Portugal was already a country with fixed territorial borders and a steady monarchical government, an “old, continuous nation” (Leal 2008: 35).

The lack of internal problems led to the exploration beyond the frontiers of the country, financed by a military aristocracy, which in turn reaped the economic rewards of the maritime trade and the subsequent development of the first European empire (Cunha and Cunha 2010: 9–10). From the fifteenth century onwards, it was the pre-Roman tribes of the *Lusitani* that were hailed as the forebears of the Portuguese (Sobral 2008), glorified as the first national heroes due to their resistance against the conquering Roman armies (Arruda 2008: 13). Yet the Roman past is as much inextricably linked with Portuguese heritage as those Lusitanians. The most evident manifestation is the Latin-derived Portuguese language itself, which shares many elements with other Romance languages, from French and Italian to Romanian.

The Age of the Discoveries and the subsequent emergence of Portugal as the seat of a globally-reaching empire, stretching onto four continents (from Europe to south America to Africa to southeast Asia) played a dramatic role in modern identity narratives from the

eighteenth century onwards. The conceptualization of this period as the pinnacle of the Portuguese national existence forms the topos emerging through sixteenth- to early twentieth-century self-representation: imperial pride, followed by the longing for the glorious era that once was, and subsequently its critique as a colonial system using and reproducing violence (Soares 2006).

In these self-reflections the ocean and its exploration form integral aspects of the “achievements of the Portuguese creative genius,” such as Luís Vaz de Camões’ (1524–1580) *Os Lusíadas*, published in 1572, considered the national epic poem of Portugal that celebrated imperial expansion, veiling it into a mythologizing shroud of phantasy (Soares 2006: 79). In subsequent centuries, national narratives of self-perception mirrored the vicissitudes of the crumbling Empire. Leal (2000: 272–73, 2008: 37–38) persuasively argues that Adolfo Coelho’s and Rocha Peixoto’s (ca. 1870s–1910s) pessimistic ethnographical works, portraying Portuguese folk culture in a state of gloomy existence and emphasizing its ‘declining moral qualities,’ seeped out of the declining state of the Portuguese Empire itself and the diffuse negative ideology among the elite and intellectual circles of the time. Such attitudes were condensed in the belief that the former virtuous characteristics of the Portuguese soul were degenerating, which provided an etiological explanation for the decreasing Portuguese power and influence over its annexed territories. In twentieth-century ethnographic representations, the call of the ocean “was the soul of the nation and the driving force behind Portugal’s history” (Leal 2008: 44). The spirit of adventure it takes to master if not conquer the ocean, explore and keep exploring in what in medieval times were very long, arduous, and pioneering voyages became a *leitmotif* in Jorje Dias’s (1953) *Os elementos fundamentais de cultura portuguesa*, the renowned Portuguese anthropologist’s essay on the ‘Lusitanian character,’ the ‘national character’ of the Portuguese. In this work, the empire and the ocean are inextricably linked with the “expansive nature of Portuguese culture” (Leal 2008: 44). Thus, much of the intimate social connection to the sea, projected in modern cultural life in Portugal, can be understood

through the reception of the Age of the Discoveries and subsequent imperial expansion as ‘symbolic capital.’ The sea has become the memorial landscape to which many art forms return for inspiration, from literature to painting to sculpture, while it is also visible in the more mundane daily-life settings, as in the decoration of the sidewalks in coastal towns that depict the sea, fish and poignantly, *caravelas* (Cunha and Cunha 2010: 9–10). The latter operate as an unmistakable signifier for the Age of the Discoveries. For centuries, the ocean had been the source of “adventure, of wealth, heroism and heartache” (Cunha and Cunha 2010: 76), a structuring element of Portuguese society, which found its lyrical expression in folk songs, poetry, and other forms of cultural life, attaining a place in national narratives and being embodied in daily life settings.

Traditions of national reflections on the Portuguese ‘ethnopsychology’ of the latter third of the nineteenth century and the later descriptions of the ‘national character’ of the early twentieth century construed *saudade* as another defining topos of self-representation. In accounts of Portugal as a travel destination, *saudade* is portrayed as a quintessential aspect of the Portuguese soul, unknown and unknowable by anyone not sharing in the Portuguese identity (Almeida Santos 2004: 131). First documented as a word in the fifteenth-century literary text *Leal Conselheiro*, there were sparse references to it until the nineteenth-century era of nationalism, where it was employed as a distinctive trait of the Portuguese nation in a rally to describe and fulfil the checklist needed for legitimizing the nation’s existence (Leal 2000: 269–70). The prominent poet Teixeira de Pascoaes, in a number of essays on the structuring theme of the ‘nation’s soul’ (1912–1926) founded the neoromantic movement of *saudosismo*, the objective of which was a spiritual, intellectual and cultural renaissance of the Portuguese nation. Within this movement, *saudade* translated as nostalgia and grief for what ‘once was’ and had as an object of melancholic and plaintive contemplation the Empire—and as such it was far more contained, structured and addressable than an unbridled exploration of *feelings* (Leal 2000: 270–73).

Defining *saudade* as a major element of Portuguese ‘ethnopsychology’ was to ascribe to it an exclusive

position and significance that it did not have, but also to endow it with the prescriptive quality of driving Portuguese history, from the foundation of Portugal to the Golden Age and the composition of *Os Lusíadas*. This amalgam of different ideas and notions on Portuguese folk culture was the source of the invented tradition of the *saudade* (Leal 2000). In nineteenth-century Portugal, the unity of the nation as defined by Teixeira de Pascoaes was founded in the perception of one language, one literature, one history, and art defining the nation, which in itself was conceived of as the blend of ‘Aryan’ and ‘Semitic’ (e.g., Sobral 2008). According to this movement, the supposed ‘naturalism’ of the former and the ‘spiritualism’ of the latter purportedly gave the Portuguese nation its specific character (Sobral 2008: 212–13), expressed in clearly racist overtones, as Leal (2000: 274) observes, “as desire” for the Aryan roots and “as grief” for the Semitic origins.

Within this emphasis on the medieval and imperial past, it follows that the monuments of collective, national memory became those that embody the glorious days of expansion, pertaining to symbolic moments of national pride. Two of the few remaining examples of Manueline architecture in the world (both UNESCO World Heritage sites), located in Lisbon, are cases in point. Founded by King D. Manuel, the Jerónimos Monastery (1515–1521) in the coastal Belém city district, is an impressive and imposing monument of Gothic architecture, a place of worship for the sailors departing on long (exploratory) journeys (Fig. 4). In the same district, the Torre de São Vicente de Belém (1514–1520), initially a military defense system for the Tagus estuary, was the departure point of exploration voyages, subsequently connecting Portugal to the ocean and to its overseas colonies (Fig. 5). The fact that then the contemporary *Padrão dos Descobrimentos* (Monument to the Discoveries), a memorial to the Age of the Discoveries, was erected too in the Belém district comes as no surprise (Fig. 6). Both Manueline monuments embody national recollection, are symbolically linked to the Portuguese Empire, and can be perceived as a compass for the present: the modern-day memorial is located in their vicinity so as to commemorate that period and look to the future as a symbol of the tenacious, adventurous Portuguese spirit.





FIG. 4  
Jerónimos Monastery, Lisbon. (Photo by E. Pappa.)

### *The Deterritorialized Nation and the Post-Colonial Recoil: Spaces for Collective Memory*

*Lusophonia* is the term used to describe the policies of the Portuguese state regarding its former colonies, construed by some as an aspect of nostalgia for the days of the Empire (Leal 2008: 48). If taken at face value, as a term referencing a pre-Roman tribe inhabiting northwestern Iberia (the Lusitani) and used as an index for imperial heritage, it would seem to privilege this specific ancient past of peninsular Portugal, of the colonizers, over the colonial 'subjects.' From the 1930s

onwards, the Estado Novo's ideological manipulation of the perception of the Portuguese nation and the empire was markedly more complex than this initial impression would suggest. Although the Portuguese Empire had never been centrally organized to the extent that an integration of continental Portugal and its overseas colonies was ever achieved, there were some late ambitions to that effect by the emergence of the Estado Novo. During the first part of the twentieth century, the Empire extended from peninsular Europe to Azores, Madeira, to territories in Africa (Cape Verde,



FIG. 5  
 Tower de Belém, Lisbon. (Photo by Zero, via Wikimedia Commons [<http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-sa/3.0/>].)

Portuguese Guinea, São Tomé and Príncipe, Angola, Mozambique), to enclaves in the same continent (São João Batista de Ajuda, Cabinda), to Asia, including the Portuguese State of India (Goa, Daman, Diu, Dadra, Nagar Haveli), Macao and Timor. The authoritative, repressive structures of the regime were enacted through legal and administrative channels, perforating educational structures, stifling fields of knowledge, imposing press censorship, and limiting cultural production both in the metropolitan areas of peninsular Portugal and in the overseas territories (Ribeiro Thomaz 2005: 58–59).

The imperial ideological manipulations, as ostensibly demonstrated by the Colonial Act of 1930, showcase the concerted attempt to render empire and nation synonymous, while perpetuating the structural violence that inheres in every empire. Cultural diversity was to be acknowledged and legally respected, albeit as pertaining to different stages of social development for which the patronage and tutelage of the imperial authorities was necessary in order to ensure the eventual assimilation into the peninsular Portuguese culture (Ribeiro Thomaz 2005: 58–66). In the Porto Exhibition of 1934, there were strategic efforts to





FIG. 6

**The Monument to the Discoveries, Lisbon.** (Photo by Alvesgaspar, via Wikimedia Commons [<http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-sa/3.0>].)

represent Portugal as the *Métropole* of its newly-termed ‘overseas provinces,’ by parading an almost invented assemble of different folkloric elements, pointing to the diversity of not only the overseas colonial world but also of the continental country itself. The result was a

“carnavalesque” depiction of the imagined communities of an “immense, variegated empire” (Medeiros 2008: 92).

Marcelo Caetano’s statement of 1951, who succeeded the first dictator Oliveira Salazar, that although respecting the *modus vivendi* of the natives, “the Portuguese have

always endeavoured to impart their faith, their culture and their civilization to them, thus calling them into the Lusitanian community” is a clear sample of imperialistic ideology (O’Neill 2008: 66). As such, the choice of the term *Lusophonian* is paradigmatic as a clear reference to the Lusitani, an indication of the selective choice of the origins for the Portuguese nation. Concurrently, Portugal remained one of the weak players of the European political and economic stage, although constituted by people of “widespread global dispersion,” a potent contradiction that in the post-Revolution era is projected through the imagined self-representations based on *difference* (Peres 1997: 189–90).

Such official, ‘top-down’ national narratives on identity sharply illustrate the ill-defined dynamics between collective and individual memory, since the prescribed national imagination is not necessarily embraced by all members of the citizen body, much less to the same extent. In reality, the Empire’s existence, as in every colonial endeavor, was characterized by violence: violence in the conquest of the alien territories and then during the attempt to maintain their dependency during the protracted liberation wars, as in Angola, Mozambique, and New Guinea-Bissau. In the post-imperialist (post-1974) period, the criticism of violence as a structuring element of the Portuguese identity is a recurrent theme in literary fiction (Sapega 1997: 177–84). Soares (2006) notes succinctly how in three literary pieces, dating from the sixteenth to the twentieth centuries (L.V. de Camões’ *Os Lusíadas*, J. de Sena’s *Os Grão-Capitales*, and J. Saramago’s *A Jangada de Pedra*), violence emerges as the underpinning element of the construction of Portuguese identity, both in a European and in a colonial context. Violence as a topos of literary self-representation in the post-colonial world of the former Portuguese colonies is addressed by L. Jorje’s in *A Costa dos Murmúrios* and P. Chiziane’s *Ventos do Apocalipse*, where the narratives employ irony and ambivalence to deconstruct molded, outdated national imageries wrought by violence (Dias-Martins 2008). In essence, in formal and informal expressions of collective memory, the Empire is always the implicit point of reference in any conceptualization of Portuguese identity, the yardstick and compass by which the state of ‘Portugueseness’ can be assessed

or accessed (Leal 2000). This works prismatically as the antipodean view to a ‘glorious era’ emphasizing the contingencies of more recent histories, the specificities and experiences of the colonial realities (both in Portugal and its former colonies), and the transition to the collapse of the imperialistic structures.

### **The Phoenician Heritage as an Acknowledged, Contained *Other*: Representation Without Identity Performance**

This analysis of the elements structuring Portuguese national identity narratives, linking the ancient to the medieval past and to the present, allows us to see both the selectivity imparted in the traits selected for the definition and the actual performance of these features in the present. They were internalized through centuries of active encouragement or imperial ideological manipulation, crystallizing as topoi in national narratives. O’Neill (2008: 66) notes with regard to the ethnic self-representation among the Malaka Portuguese in Malaysia that “identities therefore are not only mutable, manipulable and dissolvable, but more significantly, they can be displaced, substituted and virtually suffocated.” Could we say then that silenced cultural identity elements in the Portuguese context emerge from the Phoenician past? As I have shown, the visibility and invisibility of Phoenician cultural heritage can be attributed to other factors. The visibility achieved from the 1980s onwards proceeds from the liberation of archaeology, along with other fields of knowledge, from the demands of a repressive political regime—without an interest in or recourse to ideological manipulations of self-representation. Its invisibility, on the other hand, is the result of a break in the generational mnemonic devices sustaining collective memory from late antiquity to the medieval period (‘collective memory’ here refers to a historical period to which Wertsch’s [2002] ‘textually mediated’ collective memory does really apply).

Not unworthy of celebration, but unknown at the time when a conscious process of national image-building was unfolding, few, if any characteristics of the Phoenician period of the Portuguese land’s past were



known, despite its lingering vestiges in medieval times and early modernity. Lautensach's (1933) relatively early, by comparison, comment on the Phoenician origin of the Portuguese fishermen remains an *isolate*, certainly not the innate self-perception of the fishermen themselves. As such, the visibility of the Phoenician cultural heritage has nothing to offer in terms of identity construction in contemporary national narratives about the 'national self' or 'character.' The Lisbonites may live among and above the ancient Phoenician-period remains, tread above them in routine visits to a bank branch, just like the Athenians. Unlike them, however, and despite the interest these antiquities may generate, they do not perceive them emotively or with a sense of sacredness. The antiquities yield no authoritative power or symbolic capital in terms of self-identification or the daily cultural poetics.

Effectively, in contrast with Greeks for whom the ancient past permeates every-day life physically, socially, and culturally, the ancient Phoenician past in Portugal wields no such power, even if efforts are invested in its visibility. The reasons for this can be easily intimated: only relatively recent identification of the Phoenician culture in Portugal, a complete linguistic break from the period, the exogenous origin of this cultural group, the lack of contemporary written sources; but, primarily, a far more accessible and easily glorifiable past in the golden maritime era of the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries. Archaeology in this sense is cast outside the spaces of collective memory and national narrative construction. Instead, it is the Age of the Discoveries, King Alfonso Henriques or *saudade* that "engender everyday discourses, inside jokes and ironic or fierce arguments" (Leal 2000: 282). Conversely, the aspects of Phoenician heritage that linger in daily social life as invisible tokens of a past culture have not been actively 'silenced.' Rather, they never entered the relevant discourses in the first place, partly due to the late archaeological identification of the Phoenician past in Portugal. This situation prevails despite the fact that the origins of central aspects of modern Portuguese social practices (ranging from culinary choices to traditional industries undergoing efforts to be preserved as vestiges of 'cultural heritage') can be traced back to the settlement and frequenting of the coasts by the Phoenicians.

In the case of Portugal, the Phoenician past is researched, published, and disseminated in the public sphere but remains either in the domain of a specific type and level of education (archaeology at universities) or in a restricted social and physical sphere constituted by the archaeological remains of sites and material culture in museums and exhibitions: static, bounded by space without any cultural-social connotation transference to the present emic identity—viewed and reflected upon, but scarcely contributing to the self-representational dynamics of the Portuguese today. As such it presents a potent counter-argument for viewing archaeology (the 'generator' of ancient cultural heritage) as inherently conducive to conscious or unconscious deployments of ideologies for national narratives. The performative aspect of cultural heritage in collective memory here can thus solely relate to the acknowledgement of a (land's) past and the preservation of its material remains as constituent elements of knowledge production and reflection in the present. From this perspective, archaeology can still be seen as furnishing information in a much-scorned lately 'objective' manner.

## Conclusions

In this article, I have sketched the theoretical approaches to archaeology and cultural heritage as contested political and ideological spaces used for the construction of national narratives and the forging of related ideological discourses. To moderate the intensity of these discourses that consider cultural heritage and archaeology as inherently conducive to conscious or unconscious ideological orchestrations of identity construction, I have used as a case study the social practices of Phoenician cultural heritage of Portugal. To bring into sharper focus the salient points of the argument, I juxtaposed it with perceptions of the ancient past in Greece, employing to that purpose an eloquent recent event, used as a departure point for further elaboration. I sketched the socio-political context and specificities in which some aspects of Phoenician heritage are accorded visibility, while others remain invisible. Discussing the national narratives in the country, I demonstrated that the reasons of visibility

and invisibility of Phoenician heritage do not correlate to ideological manipulations. This case study provides an example of how archaeological heritage can be made visible for reasons that extend beyond preoccupations with identity construction. Thus, I argue that we need to resist the temptation to axiomatically view the role of archaeology (the tool for recovering ancient cultural heritage) as one that inherently contributes to inauthentic, manipulated presentations of the past.

## Notes

1. Though such discourses are not mutually exclusive, but often coexist, see e.g., Hamilakis 2013: 44–46.
2. ‘Collective memory’ is a polysemic term, its meaning depending on the context. For Wertsch (2002: 30–36), its understanding as ‘textually mediated’ is preferable over its perception as something sustained by a ‘vague mnemonic device.’ What is crucial here is the context. Wertsch’s definition of ‘collective memory’ works far better in the case of a nation-state, than in a tenth century BCE village in Anatolia for example. Cubitt (2007: 18) considers social memory as generated within communities, while for him collective memory is akin to ideology. Such a semantic distinction remains rather arbitrary, and can only be explained by the need to clarify terminology in the field of memory studies.
3. “Live your myth in Greece” (Kotsonas 2012). The Greek language also possesses a word, ἀρχαιολαγνεία, to denote the ‘lustful’ fixation with the ancient past.
4. Within archaeological discourses, counter arguments to these revisionist views have been silenced for fear of being dismissed as fossil views adhering to the essentialistic, sacrosanct paradigm under fire. It cannot be ignored however that the postulation of a nineteenth-century, sweeping, top-down imposition of Hellenic identity on post-Revolution Greece (after 1830) fails to furnish any evidence regarding cultural and ethnic self-identification by Christian populations and communities residing in Ottoman Greece, especially during the centuries prior to the Revolution. Many of the Ottoman state archives, which could have provided relevant demographic information, are irrevocably lost. All this renders
- highly speculative the revisionist view if extended to include the entire population inhabiting the territory of modern Greece ca. 1750–1850 (cf. Hamilakis 2012a: 51, where the opinion that before the Revolution—and thus prior to the alleged imposition of a Hellenic identity—antiquities were perceived as ‘foreign,’ created by foreign people to those inhabiting the same places, is presented as fact). This is further aggravated by the inordinate glossing-over of the linguistic continuity (attested in unbroken literary production), even in territories with documented successive waves of settlement by Slavic and other populations from outside the borders of the Byzantine Empire, and from the Illyrian coast in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. There are several indications as to the contrary, e.g., Myrogiannis 2011.
5. “Altar of the Twelve Gods sees the light. Archaeologists hope to persuade ISAP to stop renovation work that may compromise ancient monument”. e-Kathimerini, English edition (accessed February 17, 2011). [http://www.ekathimerini.com/4dcgi/\\_w\\_articles\\_wsite4\\_1\\_17/02/2011\\_379147](http://www.ekathimerini.com/4dcgi/_w_articles_wsite4_1_17/02/2011_379147) (accessed February 17, 2011).
6. There are some early documented examples of notions of ‘spiritual’ connection. In her analysis of the diaries of Greek soldiers of the Greek-Italian war (1940–1941), Demetriou (2007: 132) adduces a passage from the diary of Kollitzas, a soldier on the front, to discuss the helplessness felt by soldiers who had to face the novel technological war machinery of the enemy that nullified any effect that their heroism may have had. Kollitzas muses on the anticipated destruction of Greece, to be wrought by the technologically superior machines of the invading Italian army against his land, a land/people ‘small in extent and in numbers.’ With a formidable lack of resources, Greece fights a defensive war that Kollitzas deems ‘suicidal’ (an irony since Greece won the war some months later). He seems to pause for a second, before drawing links with the heroic figures of the past, from the Souliotes (heroes of the Greek War of Independence/Revolution of 1821) to the fifth-century-BCE Spartan King Leonidas and his 300 soldiers who faced the Persian army, concluding: “And then some foreign, barbaric scientists tell you that in our veins does not flow the blood of those people that came and left their indelible marks in the centuries that go by! These mountains, these rivers,

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this sky makes our blood. It is this that steeled the heart of our ancestors. This is steeling ours! We shall become better [ . . . ]" (in the last phrase Kollitzas is quoting Plutarch, *Lykourgos* 21 in the original).

7. Cultural heritage management was implemented by the Portuguese Institute of Architectural Heritage (IPPAR) and the Portuguese Institute of Archaeology (IPA), later merged into the Management Institute of Architectural and Archaeology Heritage (IGESPAR). During 2012–2013, the reorganization of the cultural heritage management of the country brought the now-defunct IGESPAR under the aegis of the Directorate-General for Cultural Heritage (DGPC), along with the Institute of Museums and Conservation and the Regional Directorate for Culture for Lisbon and Tagus Valley.
8. Until 2012 by IGESPAR in cooperation with the Institute of Museums (Ministry of Culture) and the General Directorate for Innovation and Curricular Development (Ministry of Education).
9. [http://www.cmtavira.pt/cmt/parameters/cmtavira/files/File/Concursos%20Publicos/Nucleo%20Museologico%20Fenicio/Termos\\_referencia\\_Concepcao\\_elaboracao\\_projecto\\_Nucleo\\_Museologico\\_Fenicio.pdf](http://www.cmtavira.pt/cmt/parameters/cmtavira/files/File/Concursos%20Publicos/Nucleo%20Museologico%20Fenicio/Termos_referencia_Concepcao_elaboracao_projecto_Nucleo_Museologico_Fenicio.pdf), Câmara Municipal de Tavira (2010: 3), accessed March 2011. Translation is the author's.
10. As anecdotal evidence for the importance of wine in Portugal, one can cite the traditional phrase meant to be uttered when someone's meal was not accompanied by wine: "Estou as ecuras!" ("I am in the darkness!") (Cunha and Cunha 2010: 69).
11. The exhibition 'Arqueologia, conservação e restauro e dietas antigas local' (Archaeology, Conservation and Restoration of the Ancient Diets), presented in August and September 2013 at the Municipal Museum of Tavira on the occasion of Portugal's candidacy for entering the UNESCO Intangible Heritage Culture Sector 'Mediterranean Diet' (established in 2010), is a rare attempt at highlighting the contributions of different ancient people in modern Portuguese dietary customs.
12. For a contrary view, see Beekes (2004).

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