

Foreword

Editorial Board

Ex Novo Journal of Archaeology

The fifth volume of Ex Novo has the pleasure to host Flaminia Bartolini as guest editor for the special issue titled *Heritage in the Making. Dealing with Legacies of Fascist Italy and Nazi Germany*. This collection of peer-reviewed papers stems in part from the successful workshop held at McDonald Institute for Archaeological Research, University of Cambridge in December 2018 under the aegis of the DAAD-Cambridge Hub. The event gathered several international heritage experts and professionals from both Germany and Italy to explore the complexities of handling Heritage related to Fascism and National Socialism.

The selection of papers edited by Flaminia Bartolini contribute much to the debate on the shifting conditions of the reception of dictatorial regimes, and more specifically the fate of fascist material legacies from the aftermath of WWII to the present day. Over the last decade, critical heritage studies have highlighted the role of dictatorship in different historical and social realms. Fascist Italy and Nazi Germany, and broadly military regimes of the twentieth century, have often been pivotal in the creation of consensus through propagandistic reinterpretation of the past. As Bartolini argues in her introduction to this special issue

“the Fascist reuse of romanitas and Nazi Philo-Hellenism were not only a sign of cultural reception of the antiquities but were a key political tool to shape and glue together contemporary societies”.

Once the Nazi and Fascist regimes fell, their material legacies became subject to destruction, reinterpretation and memory re-work. Thus, heritage tainted by regimes and produced by them has not only paid the consequences of the *damnatio memoriae* that usually follows a major political upheaval but keeps feeding an ongoing public debate. The case studies lined up in the following pages do testify to the relevance of such discussion across Italy and Germany.

The second part of this volume includes an additional contribution by Aydin Abar which keeps in with the broad theme of political reappropriation of the past lying at the core of Bartolini’s collection of papers but strays away from their geographical focus by extending the analysis to the exploitation of Achaemenian material legacies in reinforcing nationalist narratives in nineteenth and twentieth century Iran.



Figure 1. Original artwork proposed by Agostino Sotgia for the cover of Ex Novo 2020.

The final section of this issue features an in-depth analysis by Enrico Giannichedda on the relationship between craft production and the development of language and storytelling skills. The recent book by historian Michele Cometa *Perchè le storie ci aiutano a vivere* provides the starting point for Giannichedda's insightful reflections.

Martina Revello Lami's conversation with the author of the front and back cover closes the 2020 issue. It is now an established tradition for Ex

Novo to host great artworks, but this year we launched an open call to select original creations inspired to the theme of the volume. The visionary reinterpretation of rationalist architecture proposed by Daniele Simoni beat off the competition, and his paintings *Occasione mancata* and *La torre* became the impactful front and back-cover of Ex Novo 2020. Alongside walking us through his career path in the interview Daniele explains us how the works created for our journal paved the way to a new cycle in his artistic production targeted to the deconstruction of scale, style and symmetry, the three pillars underlying the modernist language pursued by Italian architects from the 1920s to the 1940s. In doing so, Simoni's work perfectly exemplifies the relevance of dealing with Fascist legacies also in contemporary aesthetics.

Acknowledgments

We would like to thank first the guest-editor Flaminia Bartolini for choosing our journal to host her volume and all the authors who contributed to its realisation. We owe much gratitude to the colleagues who poured much energy in the double-blind peer review process to which all manuscripts have been subjected. Some of them agreed on disclosing their identities and we are glad to thank them individually: Kenneth Aitchinson, Emir Fasrami, Gabriele Gattiglia, Alfredo Gonzales-Ruibal, Francesco Iacono and Arek Marciniak.

We are of course very grateful also to our advisory board for their help and support. Finally, special thanks go to Daniele Simoni for the paintings created especially for this issue of Ex Novo.