Minoan Heritage and the Negotiation of Tradition

Aspects of an Archaeological Ethnography at Archanes, Crete

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Abstract In the Cretan village of Archanes, two material dimensions of the local past meet and operate together: one is represented by the houses restored between the 1990s and early 2000s, the other by the little-known and little-visited archaeological remains discovered in the area dating to the Minoan period. The first is associated with the economic prosperity brought on by agriculture in the first decades of the 20th century, a time that local people remember vividly. The second is associated with the historical importance of the village in specific fields since the Bronze Age. Each of these "material worlds" explains the other, and both inform the present. As for the "biography" of the most delicate of all Archaniote "objects," i.e. its rural landscape, the survival of significant elements of material culture dating from both periods has the power to "objectify" local agricultural history and aesthetic ideals; consequently, these aspects are encapsulated in a very comprehensive notion of tradition.

By examining the processes of negotiation of Archaniote heritage, in this paper I attempt to show how the very materiality of this personal and collective heritage that is now preserved has stimulated a broader re-working of the Archaniote identity by bringing the idealized conceptions of ancient history into the domain of people's everyday lives. The antiquities, the unquestionable sacred, national, but usually distant and abstracted heritage, have here discursively transcended the state-controlled space of excavated land plots and entered that of social interaction through their correlation to a "lived" past.

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What was Archanes thirty years ago? An introverted little village, ugly and unknown to most people. Its archaeological treasures had not yet been discovered nor did the village have the useful infrastructure that makes life so much easier for us today. Although as a child I often played amidst the ancient stones, I never paid attention to the all-so-important discoveries that the archaeologist's pickaxe had brought to light, discoveries so important that they earned Archanes the epithet of "Versailles of Knossos."
Now that I am old enough to view things differently, I can see that our little town is much more beautiful and comfortable [than in the past], at least externally. Whenever I go to Heraklion, I can make out that, regardless of the years gone by, this city still ranks first in Greece as far as bad taste is concerned. And I can declare, with neither fear nor passion, that Archanes is today "the Paris" of Heraklion County!
A librarian introducing a photographic album
on the Cretan town of Archanes[1]

The meanings that people give to things . . . are part and parcel of the same process by means of which they give meaning to their lives. Our cultural identity is simultaneously embodied in persons and objectified in our things.[2]

Archanes is a large village or, as it is also often referred to, a "little town" in the hinterland of Crete. It is situated along the edge of a lush valley, 15 kilometres south of the city of Heraklion on the north coast; the place is little less than 10 kilometres from Knossos, the most famous Minoan archaeological site in Crete and one of the most popular tourist destinations in Greece (Fig. 1, Fig. 2).

Agriculture is the main economic activity of the nearly 4,000 inhabitants of Archanes (Fig. 3a and b). Since the early years of the 20th century, Archaniotes have been involved in

1 The album was created by Archaniote folklorist, teacher and writer Irene Tahataki (1995). The presentation took place in the historic building of the old Primary School of Archanes on November 22, 2003.
I am deeply indebted to Professors Pietro Militello and Diamantis Panagiotopoulos for inviting me to the workshop "Modelling Archaeological Landscapes. Bridging Past and Present in two Mediterranean Islands," held in Sicily in October 2018. The inspiring environment of the workshop and the organizers' holistic approach to the study, interpretation, and management of archaeological sites worked as a long-sought incentive to return to Crete and my Archaniote informants and implement the workshop's encouragement for a socially meaningful archaeological practice. The paper is dedicated to Kathleen Hart and the memory of Bob Chatel, who followed my Archaniote (and other) adventures for a long time.
2 Tilley 2001, 260.

Fig. 1 The town of Archanes. (Photo by the author)

the production and trade of local grapes and wines (Fig. 4a and b), obtained from the cultivation of the vast lands left free by the Turks when Crete became autonomous in 1900. These vineyards yielded abundant harvests and provided exceptional economic affluence. It was during that time that the Archaniotes started building their imposing mansions, or *archondika,* many of which are still standing today (Fig. 5).

Unlike the rest of the island, where modern buildings have replaced traditional architecture to meet the needs of residents and tourists, in Archanes many old *archondika* have been not only preserved but also restored (Fig. 6, Fig. 7). This operation was made possible thanks to the considerable funds allocated by the European Union in the context of its cultural politics in the 1990s and early 2000s. Local authorities made a significant effort to carry out an extensive conservation project aimed at both the restoration of local houses and the renovation of public spaces. While it is true that the ensuing changes have altered the original aspect of the village, it is undeniable that they have also highlighted some selected features of its traditional architecture. Not accidentally, the rediscovery of the past in Archanes has come at a critical moment for the future of agriculture in the area.

Owing to these efforts, today Archanes stands apart from all other villages and towns in Crete. In nearby Heraklion as in the rest of the island, it has gained a reputation as a "lively, clean, traditional and beautiful village,"[3] a place "where a vision became reality."[4] What is

3 See Archanes 1 (webliography).
4 Giannari 2008, 6 March.

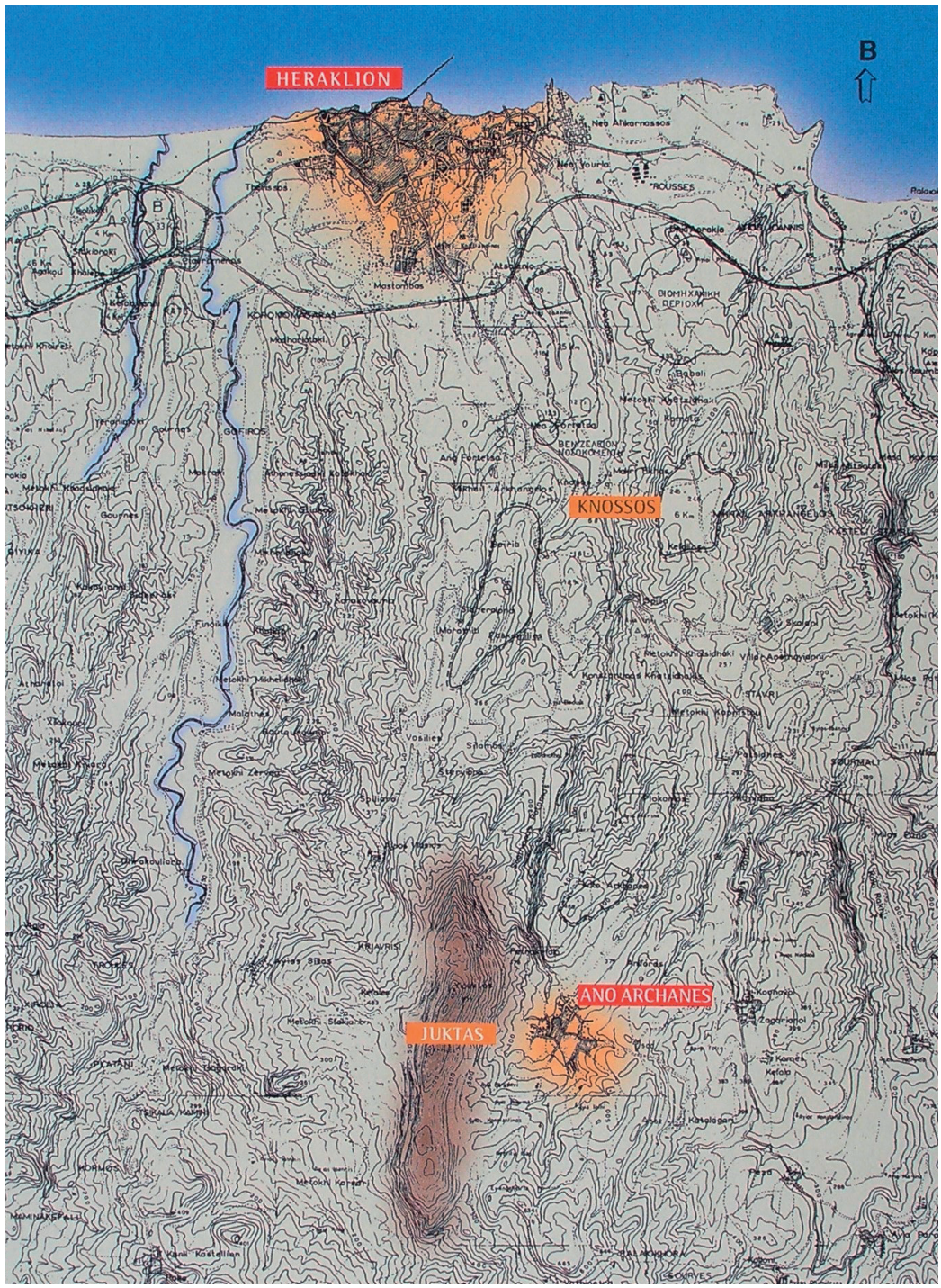

Fig. 2 Map showing part of the Heraklion District. Heraklion, Knossos, Archanes and Mt Juktas are highlighted. (Source: Tzombanaki 2002, 28)

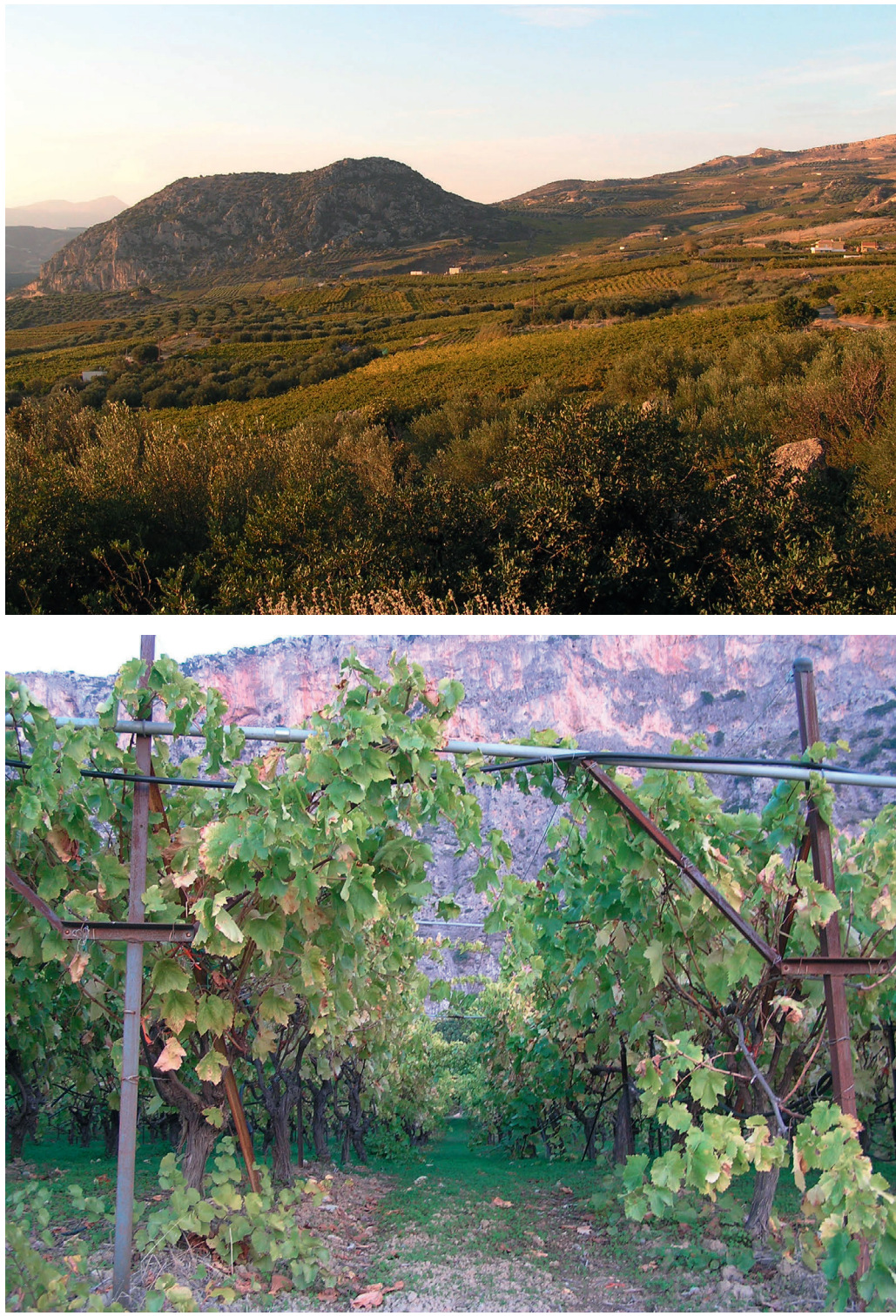

Fig. 3 Agricultural land around the village. (Photos by the author)


Fig. 4 Cultivated vines and collected harvest. (Photos by the author)

Fig. 5 A typical Archaniote mansion (*archondiko*). (Photo by the author)

Fig. 6 Restored local house. (Photo by the author)

Fig. 7 Restored local house. (Photo by the author)

more, it has won national and international awards for its developmental policies,[5] thus making a name for itself well beyond the boundaries of Crete: among the Greeks living elsewhere, in academic circles, and even among foreign visitors.[6]

The restoration of "traditional Archanes" and the ongoing process of cultural revival in the village accompanied the discovery and promotion of several archaeological remains in the area. A significant number of Minoan sites have been unearthed in and around the settlement, e.g. the center of Minoan Archanes, located underneath the modern village; the cemetery on the nearby Fourni Hill; and the sanctuaries of Mt. Juktas and Anemospilia, known since the 1960s, yet rarely visited. In the early 2000s, these and other ancient sites have received extensive coverage in local and national media as "substantial evidence of the timeless significance of the settlement."[7]

This study drew inspiration from the three main typologies of material culture found in Archanes, as delineated above: the old—now restored—traditional houses, the rural landscape, and the newly discovered Minoan antiquities. What is at play in the makeup of these categories are some fundamental notions of tradition, which actively shape and are being shaped by a distinct sense of Archaniote identity. The cultural qualities attached to these entities raise issues regarding the definition of an "Archaniote heritage"—i.e. its negotiation, representation, and consumption at a local level, as well as its implications for collective memory.

The discussion draws upon a vast literature on the management of tradition, intended as a form of representation of a group's local knowledge over a period of time, and its social and political implications for community heritage.[8] It builds on the idea that objects do not simply reflect social realities—as the dominant Western tradition would have them do—but actively contribute to shaping human actions and agency.[9] Coherent with this approach, local material culture is here regarded as an active producer of meanings, affecting and in turn being affected by social relations. Secondly, this study emphasizes the malleable and ambivalent features of tradition, especially against the background of the process of modernization in Greece. To this scope, it will look at the sensorial and affective aspects of tradition and will consider how the concept relates to notions of authenticity, place making, belongingness, and will. All the factors above have a great impact on not only the study

5 Archanes was awarded second place in the European competition "Integrated and Sustainable Development of Exceptional Quality" (2000), and first place in the contest "Local Growth with Respect for the Natural and Human Environment" (2002).
6 Sweet 2017, 17 May.
7 [Former] Municipality of Archanes. 2005.
8 E.g., Cowan 1988; Thomas 1992; Giddens 1994; Macdonald 1997; Sutton 1998.
9 Miller and Tilley 1996; Gell 1998; Tilley 2001; Buchli 2002; Henare et al. 2007.

of heritage and material culture but also the practices of architectural conservation, urban planning, community development, as well as the tourist industry.[10]

In what ways is the negotiation of the Archaniote tradition related to the Minoan finds and other expressions of local material culture? What are the contents, social meanings, and uses of this now highly appreciated, ancient, Cretan heritage, and what role does it play in people's thoughts and actions? Revisiting the ethnographic fieldwork that I carried out in Archanes between 2001 and 2007, I shall attempt to explore the importance of community participation in local heritage management as well as the role of Archaniote antiquities and landscape in a series of locally specific social processes.[11]

Life in the village

Hills of variable height surround Archanes, whose territory is covered, as far as the eye can see, by vineyards and a smaller number of olive groves. Towards the slopes of Mount Juktas, the abundant vegetation gives way to cultivated fields (Fig. 8a). The imposing shape of the mountain casts a shadow over the village, and it seems that life here has always run in visual, economic, and symbolic relation to this feature of the natural landscape.

Compared to other Cretan mountains, Mt. Juktas is not particularly high (811 m). The upper part of the range is distinctive for its rocky ledges, while the massif is dotted on all sides with caves sculpted by the force of the wind; this feature is prominent on the western side of the hill (Fig. 8b), remote and wild, housing rare flora, and wild birds.

The mountain is visible from both Knossos and the north coast of Crete, and to the boats entering the port of modern Heraklion. As a geographical landmark, it appears in almost all engravings made by Europeans traveling to Crete from 1415 onwards.[12] When seen from

10 See, e.g., Silverman 2015; Gnecco and Ayala 2016; Amoruso 2017; Mergos and Patsavos 2017.

11 The ethnographic research was conducted for the purpose of my doctoral thesis, entitled "'Multiple Historicities' on the Island of Crete: The Significance of Minoan Archaeological Heritage in Everyday Life" (2007). The aim of my research was to investigate the manifold ways in which people from different groups perceive, narrate, and relate to the prehistoric past of the island of Crete (see also Solomon 2006, 2008). Archanes, with its (until recently considered to be) minor archaeological heritage, presented an interesting case study: the size and popularity of the village around the archaeological site and the emphasis placed on forms of local heritage other than the antiquities, set it apart from the other villages nearby, mostly tiny and neglected, and of course, Knossos, the most famous archaeological site in the area. Staying in Archanes enabled me to carry out an in-depth participant observation of the ways an "emergent" archaeological heritage has come to be integrated into the everyday life and practices of local people, the related imaginings of history and identity and, not least, the construction—literally and metaphorically (cf. Appadurai 1995)—of this Cretan locality in the present.

12 Tzombanaki 2002, 20–23, 41–42.

Fig. 8 Mt Juktas as seen from Knossos and its rocky western side. (Photo by the author)

a distance, its pointed peaks are reminiscent of a male head in repose—which explains the denomination of "anthropomorphic" often accompanying its name (*Juktas, to anthropomorpho vouno*). This feature is perhaps the reason for the widespread belief that Zeus was buried here. Since the Renaissance, the association between Mt. Juktas and the god has been so strong that many erudite personalities have travelled here searching for Zeus's "grave;"[13] the fact that some Archaniotes still remember this legend does, in truth, lend some vague credibility to it.

On top of the mountain, the Orthodox church of the Transfiguration of Christ (*Afendis Christos*) stands a short distance away from a Minoan "peak sanctuary."[14] On August 6, the day of the church festival, thousands of people spend the night on the mountain, including many expatriated Archaniotes who regularly return to the village for this special occasion. Demonstration of respect to Christian faith and this church in particular is commonly taken to be the reason for the unusual westward orientation of most houses in the village.[15] Many local *mantinades*—popular verses improvised by Cretans on different occasion—poetically mix the transfiguration of Christ with the legend of the annual birth and death of the ancient father of the gods, Zeus.

The houses of Archanes are laid out amphitheatrically very close to each other, appearing to embrace a rather steep hill at the centre of the village (Fig. 9). Most public functions are performed on the relatively flat stretch of land between this hill and Mt. Juktas. Public buildings, tavernas, and coffee-houses attracting visitors and local youngsters are located on the main square; (Fig. 10) the square is stone-paved, like many of its back streets, and has pleasant displays of plants and trees (Fig. 11).

13 Christinidis and Bounakis 1997, 15–19.
14 Karetsou 1981.
15 Doundoulaki-Oustamanolaki 1996, 39.

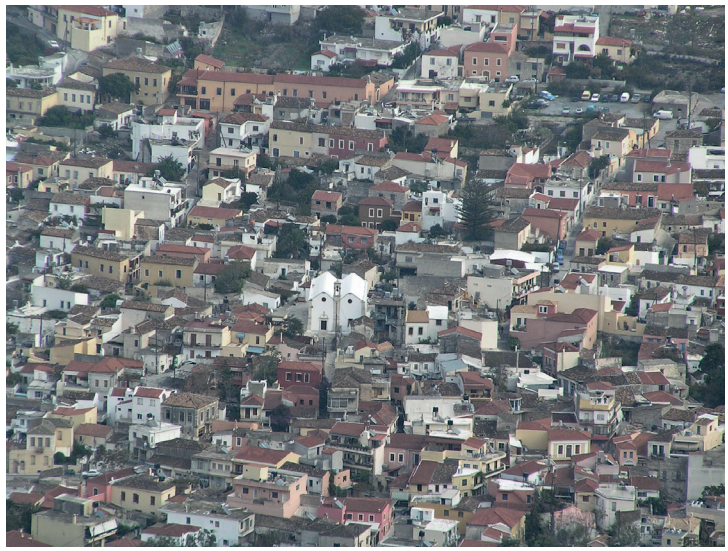

Fig. 9 A view of the central hillside of Archanes.

Fig. 10 Tavernas on the main square. (Photo by the author)

Fig. 11 Archanes "upgraded". A backstreet. (Photo by the author)

Fig. 12 Distribution of 54 *archondika* and important public buildings in Archanes. The importance of the "Nice Road" that crosses the village is obvious with several wealthy residences on both sides. (Source: Tzombanaki 2002, 128)

It is no coincidence that many of the most impressive *archondika* are located on the "nice road" (*o kalos o dromos*) (Fig. 12), the central road that crosses the local market and hosts the majority of local shops and coffee-houses (*kafenia,* Fig. 13): a lavish display of wealth and good taste by some prominent Archaniote families.

Fig. 13 Coffee-house at the local market. (Photo by the author)

All neighbourhoods are rural in terms of their inhabitants' basic professional activity; no distinction exists between rich and poor areas. Except for the "nice road," all quarters have always had a mixed population, with one or more *archondika* standing next to more modest residences.

History and economy

The history of Archanes is directly connected to that of the adjacent urban centers. In Minoan and Roman times, Knossos was the major agricultural, commercial, and administrative point of reference for Archaniotes. Knossos also served as a communication link between Archanes and the other chief places along the north coast of Crete, the Aegean islands, and beyond. In more recent times, the role of Knossos was taken over by the Arabic-Byzantine city of *Chandax,* called *Candia* in the Venetian period, *Megalo Kastro* ("Great Castle") in Ottoman times, and eventually *Heraklion.*

In the second half of the 19th century, the enactment of a major legal reform granting basic rights to non-Muslim Ottoman subjects sparked the gradual development of a Christian, Greek-speaking bourgeoisie. This group, composed of merchants and intellectuals, was later to become the local elite. This fact has left Archanes with important memories of

the several anti-Ottoman revolts that took place nearby. During the Cretan Revolution of 1897, the most ferocious battles against the Turks were fought in the neighbouring hills, and Archanes was the first village in Crete to be freed from Ottoman control.

Of great discursive significance for the local population is also the crucial role played by Archaniote partisans in World War II, particularly in the Battle of Crete in 1941. Local partisans joined forces with members of the British anti-Nazi resistance, for example by taking part in the kidnapping of the Nazi governor of Crete, General Heinrich Kreipe, in 1944. The operation was headed by Patrick Leigh Fermor, then leader of the British resistance in Crete and the Cretan partisans.[16]

Continuity between this patriotic military past and the peaceful progress of the post-war period is often highlighted in local discussions and village presentations (Fig. 14).[17] This is how two local intellectuals describe the recent history of Archanes and the character of their fellow villagers:

> . . . in a very original as much as absurd way, Archanes combines the fierceness and roughness of a battlefield with the gentleness and the tenderness of a wealth-producing area.[18]

These lines emphasize the foundational elements on which local collective memory hinges: on the one hand, the local participation in numerous revolts and heroic acts of resistance; on the other hand, the ability of Archaniotes to produce fine agricultural products and transform their village into a wealthy society enjoying the goods of peaceful economic development. The way Archaniotes represent themselves offers an alternative to the stereotypical and often exoticized representations of Crete as the place par excellence of masculine gallantry, fierce ruggedness, illegality, and patronage.[19]

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16 Leigh Fermor 2014.

17 Interestingly, the nexus between the Cretan patriotic action and the revival of the Minoan past can be traced back to 1930, when Crete celebrated the centennial of the independence of the Greek State in Heraklion, in front of a memorial resembling parts of the palace of Knossos as it was reconstructed by Arthur Evans. Spyridon Marinatos, the archaeologist who would, several years later, excavate the site of Vathypetro outside Archanes, observed how this small memorial building "institutionalized the Minoan style in modern architecture" (Newspaper *Elefthera Skepsis* 11/5/1930, as cited in Vlachopoulos 2014, 349). As a member of the organizational committee, Marinatos invited all Cretans "who could feel the inner patriotic feelings of the Greek nation" to take part in the celebrations. In his description of the ceremonial activities led by "old Cretan fighters wearing their traditional dresses, pleasing folkloric dances" and of "a short trip to a place of historic importance," the place he refers to happens to be Archanes itself (Vlachopoulos 2014, 379 n. 32). This memorial (*heroon*) still exists at the edge of Eleftherias Square in Heraklion, despite local efforts to demolish it to construct a new building.

18 Christinidis and Bounakis 1997, 113 and 13; my translation.

19 Kalantzis 2019.

Fig. 14 Mrs Irini Tahataki, local teacher, folklorist and writer talking in 2022 about her book *The legendary kidnapping of General Kreipe* (publ. 2006). (Photo by the author)

Nowadays, viticulture is undergoing a gradual decline, although here the phenomenon is less evident than elsewhere in Greece.[20] Local farming has long been dependent on subsidies from the European Union,[21] while the vineyards yielding the prestigious *rosaki* grapes, proudly mentioned in tourist leaflets, folk poems, *mantinades,* and historical and archaeological accounts, have shrunk considerably. The painstaking cultivation of vines has been gradually replaced by that of olive trees, an activity which is simpler, less risky, and less time-consuming. Despite the unfavourable EU guidelines regulating the practice of small-scale agriculture and despite the abandonment of old methods of cultivation in fa-

20 Statistics are especially revealing in this regard. In 2013, the Panhellenic Union of Agricultural Associations (PASEGES) published the following numbers: the farming population decreased from 16.97% in 2000 (722,450 people) to 12.56% in 2010 (555,130 people) (Rousianou 2015, 54). According to Psaltopoulos et al. (2006, 445), who evaluated the impact of the CAP (Common Agricultural Policy) measures implemented in Archanes during the 1990s, employment rates in the primary sector and manufacture declined, respectively, from 57% in 1991 to 41% in 2001 and from 12% to 9%. By contrast, employment rates in the service sector increased from 31% to 50%.

21 Although most subsidies were meant to improve agricultural productivity via farm investment plans and integrate young farmers, a few measures were also taken for the diversification of local economy, especially agrotourism, through the establishment of small local firms (Psaltopoulos et al. 2006).

vour of new ones, farming remains the basic economic activity for most Archaniotes.[22] This aspect, coupled with the local landscape, has acquired great symbolic significance after the completion of the conservation program.

Archaniotes emphasize the fact that the feverish agricultural activity accountable for the economic prosperity of the past decades has not changed the mentality and sensitivity of local people: their interest in local, national, and international issues has remained the same. As a local grocer told me "Archanes was *very rich* and *very communist*"—proof that people never failed to express solidarity towards their fellow villagers, including in times of increased prosperity. Indeed, until the early 1990s, the communist party was so popular in the village that Archanes was humorously called "Little Moscow." This anecdote is often cited in collective representations as further evidence that the accumulation of wealth in Archanes did not translate into selfishness and indifference towards community life.

The village now serves as a model of administrative efficiency for many other small rural places in Greece, particularly those with an important cultural heritage. The "Archaniote miracle" has enjoyed extensive coverage in the Cretan media, on the web, in tourist guides and, needless to say, in all cultural and scientific events held locally. Already in 2002, *Radio Crete*[23] had announced that the vision of local authorities for the year 2020 was to ensure Archanes the title of "cultural capital of Crete"—thus ascribing the village a symbolic position of primacy in international representations.[24]

Before we proceed to analyze the local debate on Archaniote heritage, I shall present a brief overview of the highly valued material culture of the village and its landscapes.

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22 According to the official employment data provided by the Local Council Office in 2002, 70% of the economically active population were farmers. The Archaniote farmland covers a total area of 17,000 m^2 and counts 1,130 agricultural enterprises; in 2002, 80% of these were owned by people exclusively employed in agriculture. See Psaltopoulos et al. 2006; also Ratsika 2012.

23 10-5-2002, *Radio Crete*, program led by journalist Kostas Bogdanidis.

24 At the presentation of the photographic album in 2003 (see supra n. 2), writer Eleni Saatsaki-Plagiotaki described Archanes as follows: "Archanes, which was awarded the second European prize for its architecture, its nobility, its beauty, its history, and its dazzling presence on the European scene, will be eternally remembered also for the love of its people: they have ardently worked for its archaeological treasures, as well as the inexhaustible wealth of its folklore" (22/11/2003, Local Newspaper *Patris* [see Archanes 2, webliography]). The writer's words clearly illustrate the rhetoric of civic pride that underpins local discourses; in this frame, ancient and popular/folkloric lore, scholarly action, and cultural heritage are the hallmarks of a unified tradition that has brought Archanes to the level of an admirable Cretan place in line with "European" standards.

The material heritage of Archanes I: Minoan remains

> *Archanes has been renowned for the grapes grown in the region and for its wine. Now it is also renowned for its antiquities. The palatial building (most of which is still hidden under the village houses), if and when it is unearthed some day in the future, will be compared only to Knossos for its vigorous construction and to Phaistos for its refined lines . . . We know today the most significant prehistoric cemetery of the Aegean Sea in Fourni, a nearby hill . . . an actual lexicon of funeral architecture and rituals, with no parallel in the prehistory of the Aegean Sea.*[25]

An alabaster spoon bearing an inscription in Linear A, now in the Heraklion Museum, was the first Minoan object to be discovered in Archanes. It was the year 1909, when Stefanos Xanthoudides, a leading member of the Herakliote Educational Society, published on the find; in his report, Xanthoudides stressed the vital need for further excavations in the village,[26] which was then expanding as a result of rapid economic development.

Yet, the very restricted budget of the Greek Archaeological Service would not allow any further research until the 1920s, when the major excavator of Knossos, Sir Arthur Evans, took an interest in the place—a circumstance that sparked the illicit trade of locally found Minoan artefacts.[27] Evans himself bought a golden Minoan ring and some seals that are now on display at the Ashmolean Museum in Oxford.[28] He brought to light a few remains of the so-called Turkish Quarter of Archanes (*Tourkogitonia*), where the Minoan palatial center was to be unearthed several decades later by archaeologists Yannis and Efi Sakellarakis. Although Evans worked in Archanes for only very brief periods and his finds were rather modest and sporadic, he clearly left a mark on the village and its people. His interpretation of the Archaniote remains as the summer residence of King Minos[29]—echoing, as in Knossos, a Victorian mentality[30] according to which royal families used to spend the summer in a different palace—has never been forgotten.

In 1949, Spyridon Marinatos, General Curator of Antiquities and Professor of Archaeology, conducted the first systematic excavations at Vathypetro, four kilometres south of the village.[31] Amid an intensively cultivated land—today a strongly aestheticized landscape (Fig. 15)—he discovered the remains of what he called a "Minoan villa." The image of this

25 Sakellarakis 2003, 84–85, my translation.
26 Sakellarakis and Sakellaraki 2002, 22.
27 Sakellarakis 2008.
28 Sakellarakis 1999, 82.
29 Evans 1928, 64.
30 See Papadopoulos 2005.
31 Marinatos 1951.

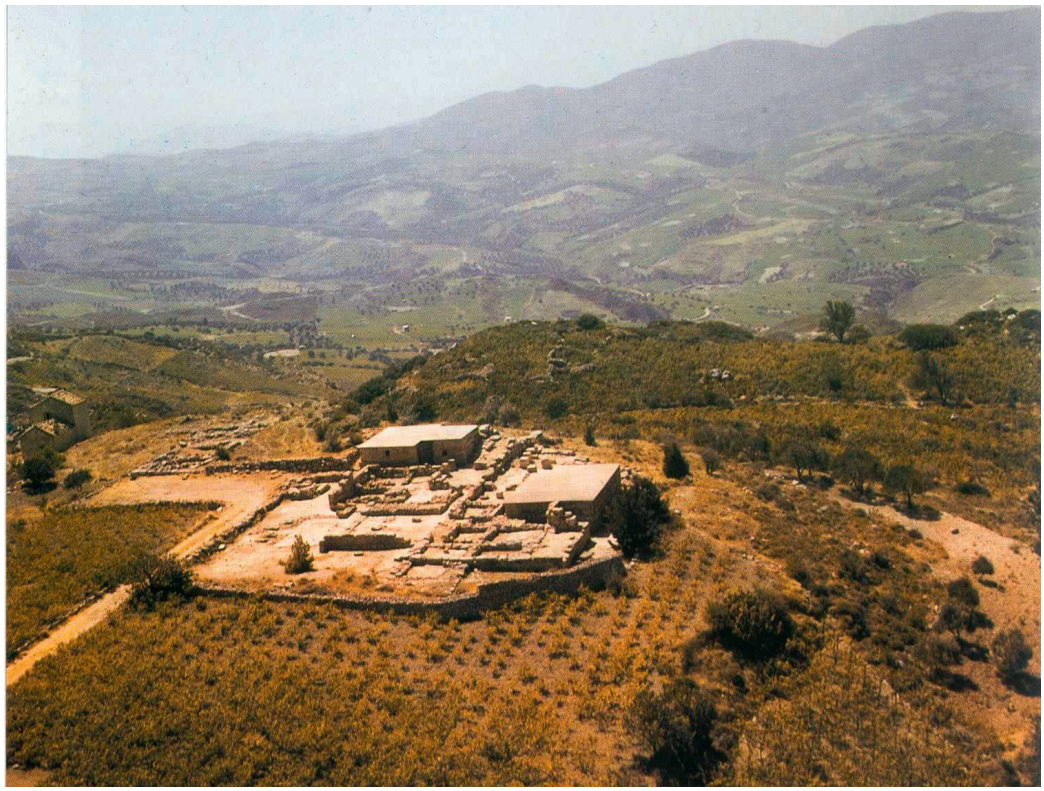

Fig. 15 The remains of a Minoan farmhouse. Vathypetro (Archanes). (Source: Sakellarakis and Sakellaraki 2002, 16)

villa, together with its olive press and wine press, has accompanied all symbolic references to Cretan agricultural traditions ever since.

Systematic excavations inside and outside the village only began in 1964 with the Sakellarakis couple. Besides the palatial building, they brought to light rich tombs and burial offerings from the cemetery on nearby Fourni Hill, as well as the remains of the Minoan temple of Anemospilia on Mt. Juktas—which, upsettingly at the time, they associated with ritual human sacrifices and the "drama of death" (Fig. 16).[32]

Within the framework of the conservation project and its cultural politics, in 1993 several Archaniote antiquities found a suitable exhibition space in a small local museum con-

32 Sakellarakis and Sakellarakis 1981. It is worth mentioning that, already in 1956, an excavation conducted by Dutch archaeologists in collaboration with Marinatos had brought to light some remains possibly related to the "palatial building" that would be discovered one decade later; this excavation was totally forgotten until 2015, when Bart Wagemakers (2015) discovered, assembled, and published the relevant documentation.

Fig. 16 Graphic reconstruction of the earthquake that destroyed the temple according to its excavator. (Source: Sakellarakis and Sakellaraki 2002, 147)

Fig. 17 An old school of Archanes, now housing the local archaeological collection. (Photo by the author)

verted from a restored school building (Fig. 17). This fact illustrates the tendency of today's Archaniotes to view their ancient and recent past through a unified representational perspective.

During my fieldwork, the excavated remains of the "Minoan palatial building" at Tourkogitonia became accessible to the public. Although the absence of open spaces around the excavated site minimizes the visual impact on the visitor, the narrative built around the remains relies on the very idea that the area, and particularly the precincts of the palace, have been inhabited for a long time. Even today, the site is surrounded by modern houses (Fig. 18). Certain elements, e.g. stone benches and walls built in the early 20th century and vegetal decorations made with flowers and herbs from Mt. Juktas, contribute to the creation of a new but characteristic landscape based on the idea of "Archaniote style." Once

Fig. 18 The remains of the "palatial building" at Tourkogitonia, Archanes. (Photo by the author)

again, this style incorporates references not only to the Minoan era but also other historical periods important to local memory. For example, the floor of a modern local house that had to be demolished for the purposes of the excavation was intentionally left in place as a testimony of the age-long residential character of the quarter.

It is also interesting to note that the rather tentative denomination of "palatial building" for the archaeological structure at Tourkogitonia was gradually substituted by the term "palace." The popularity of the term has been such, especially in the aftermath of the conservation program, that nowadays there is virtually no mention of the site outside academic circles without reference to "The Palace of Archanes." The same description appears in most guidebooks, local history books, the official website of the Ministry of Culture, and other sources.[33]

The categorical reproduction of sound characterizations of the Archaniote excavation and its finds came to the fore in 2000, with the discovery of two rooms within the complex

33 Ministry of Culture, Greece, 2012.

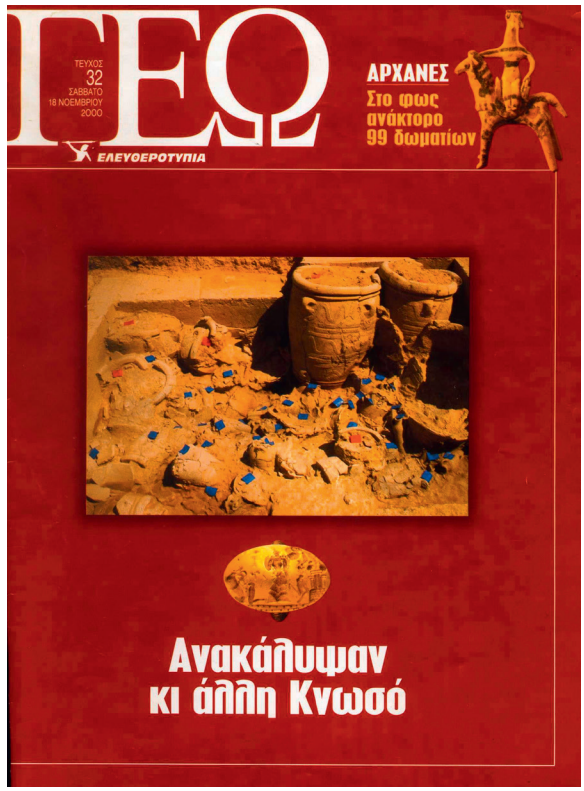

Fig. 19 "Another Knossos has been discovered". Newspaper "Eleftherotypia", Geo magazine (vol. 32, 18/11/2000).

of Tourkogitonia. On November 18, 2000, the national newspaper *Eleftherotypia* announced on the cover of its magazine *Geo* that "another Knossos [had] been discovered" at Archanes and that "a palace with 99 rooms [had] come to light" (Fig. 19).[34] This finding was presented as a "major, recent and shattering discovery of another Minoan palace."[35]

Due to the great publicity that archaeological Archanes has received since the early 1990s, the cemetery at Fourni and the building at Tourkogitonia are today taken as tangible proof of the royal status of their Minoan users. Local archaeological finds have been portrayed as being of (at least) equal importance to the antiquities in Knossos, bringing Evans's old theory about King Minos's summer residence back into the forefront of local discussions.

34 Georgoudis 2000. This number is obtained from a calculation based on the number of rooms on the hypothesized three floors of the palace.
35 Georgoudis 2000.

The material heritage of Archanes II: architecture

The restored Archaniote houses, the *archondika,* combine the Balkan rural elements typical of Ottoman architecture with Venetian reminiscences, mainly "borrowed" from the nearby city of Heraklion. Pronounced neoclassical elements are present too, in line with the dominant architectural style found in Athens and most Greek urban centers (Fig. 20). Since the independence of the Greek State in 1829, the neoclassical style has indeed been regarded as a major expression of national identity, with specific references to classical antiquity and the "enlightened" West.[36]

The belated emergence of neoclassicism in Archanes not only implied the projection of "Greekness" on a local scale and the symbolic beginning of a new era for the village, but also made manifest the social prestige and taste of its wealthy residents.[37] The exterior of most houses display elements of monumental architecture, e.g. columns, big blocks of stone, symmetrical organization of spaces, and stone frames around gates, doors, and windows (Fig. 21, Fig. 22). In some cases, the arched frames and the colors of the walls recall the Venetian style directly (Fig. 23, Fig. 24, Fig. 25).

Fig. 20 Neoclassical elements in Archaniote houses. (Photo by the author)

Fig. 21 Arched stone frames and other monumental elements in local houses. (Photo by the author)

36 Biris and Kardamitsi-Adami 2001.
37 Tzombanaki 2002.

Fig. 22 Arched stone frames and other monumental elements in local houses. (Photo by the author)

Fig. 23 Columns and colors reminding the Venetian architectural legacy in Crete. (Photo by the author)

Fig. 24 Columns and colors reminding the Venetian architectural legacy in Crete. (Photo by the author)

Fig. 25 Columns and colors reminding the Venetian architectural legacy in Crete. (Photo by the author)

The bipartite structure of the *archondika* is a material expression of the double character of Archaniote society, rural and urban at the same time. The interior is divided into two complementary sections: while one is deputed to farming and other rural activities, the other, usually located on the upper floor, consists of rooms decorated in a bourgeois fin-de-siècle style. The internal yard, which shields private life from prying eyes, is still an important element of Archaniote domestic architecture; it is also an arena of competition for Archaniote women in terms of decoration, cleanliness, and display of plants, flowers, and colors (Fig. 26).

However, the existing legal protective clauses could not prevent the morphological changes the village underwent after World War II. Many new structures were built, especially in the 1970s and 1980s (Fig. 27). The high cost of maintenance and repairs of old houses—some of which of considerable size—was too high for many to afford. On the one hand, many houses were left abandoned or to decay after their owners moved out of the village; on the other hand, those who kept living in their old properties found some simple and relatively inexpensive maintenance solutions, although this came at the cost of significantly altering the houses' original aspect.

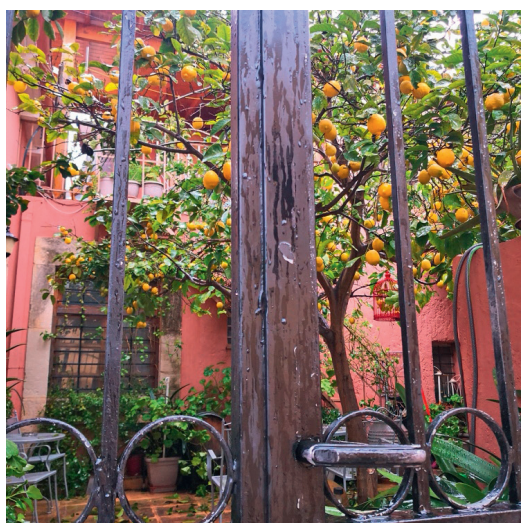

Fig. 26 Private yard in a restored house. (Photo by the author)

Fig. 27 Structures built in the 1970s and 1970s. (Source: Acts Archanes 1992: 185)

The authentication of Archaniote heritage

I have so little to say about Sakellarakis,
The one who first started this project:

If you throw a stone anywhere
"Don't!" you hear from everybody,
"You'll ruin King Minos's city!"
Improvised mantinada by an Archaniote resident; my translation

After that [i.e. the restoration of local buildings] *we removed the aluminium from the houses of the village, we added wood and ceramic tiles on the roofs and we* ***painted them in Minoan colors.***
Interview with S. Arnaoutakis, the Mayor of Archanes, emphasis added[38]

In 1992, when Archanes obtained funding from the European Union, the local authorities asked the Polytechnic School of Athens for permission to undertake the first phase of a house restoration program, to be carried out in conformity with specific aesthetic and social principles.[39] The preservation of traditional architecture was justified as an attempt to save Archaniote houses as local expressions of historical memory and prove "the cultural continuity of the Greek nation" on a local level. Architect Anastasia Benetaki emphasized the national significance of the project with these words:

> *It is necessary to protect traditional settlements, to preserve and make the most of our architectural inheritance . . . in order to preserve our historical memory as a people. The cultural continuity* [. . .] *of our nation is a substantial element of its existence* [. . .]
>
> *Because of their authenticity, these [settlements] are a token of civilization; their multiple expressions are at* ***the basis of our historical legacy and national identity.***[40]

Whereas for the Greek State the preservation of the perceived authenticity of local architecture was meant as a demonstration of the nation's cultural continuity from antiquity to modern times—an emphasis on continuity being an essential aspect of Greek politics on the past[41]—the support offered by the European Union had a rather different meaning. Since the early 1990s, the EU has encouraged local development by financing activities and

38 See Archanes 3, webliography.
39 Archanes Acts 1992.
40 Benetaki 1992, 13; my translation, emphasis added.
41 See, e.g., Herzfeld 1982; Just 1989.

projects in support of local traditions and cultural expressions, among which also the preservation of material heritage.[42] This policy is consistent with the EU's flagship notion of a European cultural identity based on the transnational synthesis of localized cultural expressions. Archanes has pioneered this vision and was able to reinvent itself over time as a special community, traditional and European at the same time.

The Archaniote project differed from other initiatives of architectural conservation in Greece (for example, the case of the Anafiotika quarter under the Athenian Acropolis[43] or the conservation program at the Old Town of Rethymnno in Crete, regarding private houses dating to the Venetian and Ottoman periods[44]) in that it relied on local consent. Rather than a state-run program of aesthetic control over new material forms, it had the contours of a local council initiative. Archaniotes were given the possibility of restoring their old houses without bearing the entire cost of the operation, which was to be partly financed through European funds. This approach is quite different from what happened in the modern settlement of Knossos, where people contested the powerful presence of the Archaeological Service and the anything-but-straightforward application of archaeological laws, which they perceived as having a great impact on their life choices.[45]

The nucleus of Archanes, where most *archondika* are located, was declared a protected area of historical and archaeological importance well before the 1990s. Thus, to many the conservation project seemed a convenient opportunity to renovate buildings that *had* to be preserved in any case, and could neither be demolished nor significantly altered (e.g. expanded). As an old Archaniote told me:

> *As long as you couldn't pull down a house, and you didn't want it to collapse, the only solution was to restore it. (Αφού δεν μπορούσες να το χαλάσεις, η μόνη λύση για να μην πέσει ήταν να το αναπλάσεις). Well, since there was the program, we took advantage of it! (και*

42 Deltsou 2003, 216; Aspraki 2007; Mergos and Patsavos 2017.

43 The Anafiotika settlement at the foot of the Acropolis, built in the nineteenth century in the shadow of the "Holy Rock" by workers from the Cyclades, was treated just like and considered "accumulated rubbish of unsightly dwellings" (Vikelas in Caftanzoglou 2001: 122) and thus it had to be cleared away. Caftanzoglou (2001) studied this unauthorized settlement as a "matter out of place" (cf. Mary Douglas 1966) and explored the change of heritage values over time, with the settlement now considered a nostalgic retreat by Athenians and tourists alike.

44 In the mid-1980s, in the context of the then socialist government's efforts to preserve the architectural heritage of the old town of Rethymno, history was variously interpreted in order to justify the conflicting choices, beliefs, and lifestyles that informed the different perceptions of the Venetian and Ottoman past of Crete. In his ethnographic study on the social impact of the historic preservation of local private houses, Michael Herzfeld (1991) has shown how the cultural politics of Greek nationalism and the rhetoric of state bureaucracy responded to the socio-economic interests and expectations of Greek people, all of which raised issues of practical and symbolic ownership over the significant cultural assets in the town.

45 See Solomon 2006, 175–77; 2007, 205–45; cf. Stroulia and Back-Sutton 2010; Solomon 2021, 24–27.

μια που ήρθε το πρόγραμμα, να το εκμεταλλευτούμε!). Had we pulled houses down, made a third floor, etc. then, of course, there would have been reactions against it. But we couldn't, so we accepted it.

The project focused on not only houses (traditional and modern) but also communal spaces. The aim was to integrate the surrounding natural environment—a crucial agent in the history and economy of Archanes—into the *builtscape.* Attempts were made to harmonize "monumental time" and "social time,"[46] official policies and people's expectations, and monumental and living heritage.

Significant emphasis was placed on neoclassical architectural elements, especially on stone (Fig. 28). In all restored buildings, the limestone blocks at the four corners and other elaborated stone components, e.g. arches, columns, pillars, cornices, windows, and door frames (*pelekia*), were uncovered beneath multiple layers of plaster (Fig. 29, Fig. 30). Such a profusion of cream-colored stone was made to stand out in contrast to the rich colors of the plaster, which were chosen for their supposed adherence to tradition.

Fig. 28 The program of the village's aesthetic upgrading: highlighting the use of stone. (Source: Acts Archanes 1992: 193)

The project also involved the removal of the constructions added to the houses after World War II, which specialists dismissed as aesthetically unpleasant and ill-suited to the idea of Archaniote tradition, bearing the risk of "falsifying" or "spoiling" the aspect of the whole village (Fig. 31 a and b).[47] The study also established which colors the owners would need to use to paint their properties; these colors were often perceived and promoted as "Minoan" (Fig. 32).[48]

46 Herzfeld 1991.
47 Syrmakezis 1992, 40.
48 See supra n. 37. On the significance of the so-called "Knossian red color" in cultural representations of Crete, see Solomon (forthcoming).

Fig. 29 Door frame in stone. (Photo by the author)

Fig. 30 Architectural elements in stone. (Photo by the author)

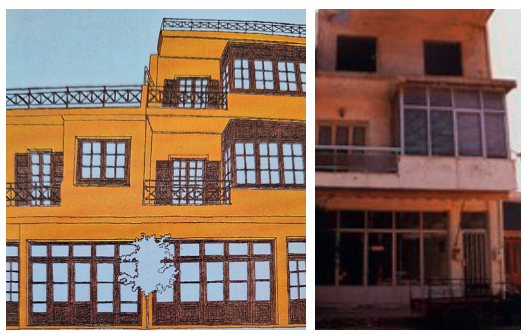

Fig. 31 Changing the aspect of modern constructions in order to comply with the notion of traditional architecture. (Source: Acts Archanes 1992: 172)

Fig. 32 The Archaniote Center for the Elderly ("KAPI"), a modern construction painted in "Minoan red". (Photo by the author)

The institutionalization of tradition carried out through the restoration project also required stakeholders to take decisions concerning the (re)use of some restored houses. These decisions added new phases to the "biographies"[49] of old Archaniote private residences. Today a few of these host public institutions, e.g. the folklore museum, opened in 2002; a meeting place for Archaniote youngsters; and a municipal exhibition space, housed in the renovated *archondiko* of the Lidakis family. The most prestigious public buildings of Archanes, i.e. the former town hall, the old primary school, and the old main school buildings, have been re-adapted to accommodate new functions and spaces, among which are the archaeological museum, the Cretan annex of the Greek Open University, and the center for environmental education (Fig. 33). In this way, the notion of Archaniote tradition was associated with the presence of these institutions, which until the 1990s were foreign to the life of the village.

Fig. 33 The historic building of the Primary School of Archanes now housing the Cretan annex of the Greek Open University. (Photo by the author)

The decision to preserve all pre-war architectural elements to the detriment of post-war additions implies that the period between 1950 and 1990, despite marking the end of the economic stagnation and poverty brought on by the war, has been deliberately excluded (perhaps for being considered unworthy of inclusion?) from what is called "Archaniote tradition." All the elements dating from this period had to be either erased or, when this was not possible, covered and replaced with newly made structures resembling the traditional ones—what D. Brown calls "genuine fakes" (Fig. 34).[50] Even certain communal spaces that

49 See Kopytoff 1986.
50 Brown 1996.

Fig. 34 Performing tradition on modern buildings. (Source: Acts Archanes 1992: 186)

never existed yet comply with people's idea of the past are now deemed as "authentically" traditional. This process has occurred in several other places in Greece, especially where local communities debate how to represent their heritage.[51]

This process of "authentication" of Archaniote culture involved co-operation between different types of authority. People *with* authority, people *in* authority, and people *speaking about* the authority of tradition[52] negotiated, contested or decided the interpretation, use and management of local heritage. The people in authority—that is, Mayor Stavros Arnaoutakis and the local council—were engaged in efforts to ensure the allocation of funds and the commission of scientific studies for the preservation of local architecture. Local intellectuals exercised their well-regarded authority in the same direction, as this followed from their occupation with folklore, that is, the domain of tradition par excellence, consolidating or reifying its meaning and aesthetic expressions.[53] (Fig. 35) Scholars working in situ, such as the archaeologist Sakellarakis—a person *with* authority, though not always uncontested—played a special and generally acknowledged role in the philosophy of the project (Fig. 36). They often demonstrated a certain sensitivity towards local cultural memory by advocating maintenance of heritage from other historical periods besides the Minoan, and by including the Archaniote landscape into their surveys. "*He* [Sakellarakis]

51 See e.g. Kenna 2003.
52 Fees 1996, 123.
53 Cf. Cowan 1988.

Fig. 35 Daedalus and Icarus in a "minoanized" scene. Embroidery made by the local teacher, folklorist and writer Irini Tahataki who donated a series of similar works to the local primary school "in order to remind local children of their heritage". (Source Tahataki 2019: 31).

Fig. 36 Commemorating Y. Sakellarakis at the courtyard of the local museum. (Photo by the author)

pushed in Europe for the renovations"—affirmed an old Archaniote woman—"he is the one who made Archanes what it is now."

Such actions, however, were not always accepted without objections. Vagelis Horafakis, an Archaniote housepainter who received only a basic education,[54] recalls the initial periods of the restoration campaign as difficult. At that time, many people refused to see "what was good for the place:"

> *It is always the educated people, the intellectuals, who will struggle against power and thus set things right. And I am not talking about the mayor, the authorities, but the locals. Sup-*

54 All informants are referred to by fictional names, with the exception of the mayor of Archanes and the renowned archaeologists and researchers.

pose Sakellarakis had not been there to talk and grumble and quarrel and say 'don't use cement to build'—do you have any idea what would be left of Archanes by now? Nothing. It would have been turned exactly into a new Timbaki or Moires, these awful copies of Heraklion. Do you have any idea of what we went through when the decision about the houses was taken? People were arguing in the kafenia (coffeehouses). Ask anybody: they will tell you. But it was only a minority that reacted against it and they were finally convinced. Sakellarakis told them: "This is a holy mountain [Mt. Juktas]*; it is not proper to put antennas on it." But there were people who claimed that they should be allowed to watch more TV channels; can you see what I mean? I think that there should be more sensitivity around these issues. People don't realize that if we don't take up any action, we'll all end up being identical to anyone else due to globalization.*

Vagelis is willing to support the initiative as long as archaeologists and local authorities protect the historical character of Archanes as "objectified"[55] in its material and natural heritage. For him, the modernity of Heraklion, now replicated in many small towns in the region, clashes with the significance of his place; it should be avoided as an example of the negative effects of cultural homogeneity brought on by globalization. The preservation of material heritage is an ethical issue, a tangible step towards the safeguarding of local identity. Unlike other places in Greece, where identity is mainly affirmed through a top-down approach to antiquities preservation as imposed by state archaeological authorities, in Archanes the affirmation of local identity involves the preservation of inhabited spaces and landscapes. These even include "non-modernized" aspects of Mt. Juktas, a place imbued with great sacredness due to sustained religious practice over time.

In a paper given in 2001, Yannis Sakellarakis encouraged the Archaniotes sitting in the audience to remain dedicated to agriculture, "as local people have always done [there] since Minoan times," and to prevent Archanes from becoming "a suburb of Heraklion."[56] This seemingly odd encouragement to agriculturists in practicing their "age long tradition"—inextricably linked to the "threatening" expansion of Heraklion towards Archanes—reveals the weight that scholarly authority retains in all matters concerning not only the past and its national significance but also the present and future of the village. Profound knowledge of local history, which implies recognizing agriculture as the main factor responsible for the prosperity, cultural progress, and wealth of Archaniotes, is claimed by local authorities, cultural institutions, tourist operators, and scholars alike. In reality, these practices are gradually becoming more symbolic in reference to local identity with gradually less practical grounds rather than a promising occupation in the future.

55 Tilley 1999, 2001.

56 The paper was given at a conference on the history of Archanes in the 20th century (12–13 May 2001), held at the local Primary School (see Sakellarakis 2008).

Performing and experiencing tradition

Streets in Archanes have always been stone-paved: our place has been civilized and productive from the very beginning.
Lela Papadaki, farmer.

Can anyone say that he doesn't want tourism? It's as if he says that he doesn't want any people to come here. Can anybody say that? No one can. Besides, people always used to travel, to go places. Since ancient times, Greeks and Minoans have moved from place to place. The point is what kind of tourism you want.
Vagelis Horafakis, housepainter

As one can imagine, Archanes has gradually entered the domain of cultural tourism and ecotourism.[57] Until 2002, the village had only one place offering accommodation—a hotel housed in an old *archondiko* "restored with rustic elegance," as its advertisement claims. Today, there are more than ten hotels (Fig. 37, Fig. 38). Their purpose is to offer holidays inspired by the meaning of local tradition; thus, they promote scenic views of Mt. Juktas and the rural landscape and boast of "traditional communal spaces" as well as other local attractions. Nonetheless, almost all accommodations offer modern facilities, e.g. a swimming pool in what used to be the courtyard of an old house (Fig. 39). They even serve organic food based on recipes from the old Cretan culinary tradition, often through references to the Minoan production of oil and wine as well as the use of aromatic herbs. This trend reflects a growing interest from the tourist industry in the sensory aspects of an enduring Cretan heritage (Fig. 40).[58]

The EU "subsidies to tradition," especially those provided within the LEADER programs, emphasized the special character and quality of Archaniote products and supported "alternative" or simply more sustainable activities beyond the imperatives of mass-tourism.[59] In this way, many local traditions were not only promoted and authenticated but also re-constructed, re-enacted, and eventually re-used by the local population as a means of self-representation.

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57 Archanes-Asterousia Municipality 2014.

58 Solomon 2008, 459.

59 The LEADER EU programs, implemented between 1991 and 2005, were aimed at an integrated and sustainable development of rural areas. They focused on a plurality of economic activities related to the environment, the local cultural heritage, and the connection between local traditions and modern technologies. Such programs managed to engage the members of local communities, who were called to actively participate in the funded investments (Ray 2000). For an ethnographic study of a LEADER project in Greece (*Wine Roads of Northern Greece*), see Aspraki 2007.

Fig. 37 Negotiating tradition at the interior of a local hotel.

Fig. 38 "Traditional houses" at Troullos, the central quarter of the village.

Fig. 39 Archaniote architecture as décor. Experiencing modern facilities at a local small hotel.

Fig. 40 "A municipality caring to all your senses". Multi-sensory approach to tourism at the region of Archanes and Asterousia. (Photo by the author)

In contrast to most other places on the island, where tourist advertising focuses on the antiquities and the seaside, in Archanes visitors are encouraged to experience "a place with history" which is not exclusively confined to archaeological ruins but embraces Cretan culture as a whole. "Are you looking for the real feel of an authentic Cretan village? Then Archanes is just the place to be!"[60]—announces a tourist website. As a matter of fact, Archanes is now regarded as the place par excellence to live a truly "Cretan" experience, whereby "Cretan" means "authentically" and/or "traditionally" Cretan.

With these premises, even the living spaces of Archaniotes can serve as a traditional décor—a welcome and pleasant frame to the Minoan palatial building. During our conversation, a young German tourist pointed out that the humble Minoan archaeological site excavated at Tourkogitonia is even

> *… more interesting … than Knossos, where the crowds and what you see in front of the entrance* [the tourist shops] *make it look like a circus. In Archanes, the houses of modern people all around, which are also nice,* ***make the archaeological site look more authentic****.* [Emphasis added]

A similar anecdote concerns a small, decorated square built around a tiny church as part of the overarching conservation program: a primary school group from Heraklion was on its way to the museum of Archanes when their teacher suddenly stopped in front of the square and asked the children to observe it. As she expressed, she wanted the children to "absorb"

60 See Archanes 4, webliography.

the image of the picturesque church in the middle of the nice small square, "an image characteristic of the beauty of Cretan villages that now we rarely encounter."

Within the much broader phenomenon concerning the negotiation of local traditions, which occurred over the last decades in Crete and beyond,[61] a new definition of tradition took shape in Archanes. This notion is reflected not only at a material level, in the aesthetics of houses, public spaces, and ancient sites, but also in people's judgements on the content, style, and "authenticity" of their heritage. The active engagement with these subjects generates new cultural practices, such as many promising forms of cultural tourism that have the potential to reshape—as we will see—people's living and working spaces as well as the dynamics of collective self-representation involving the recent and ancient past of the village.

A "modelled" heritage landscape: new social relations in operation

> *Historical consciousness and other forms of social knowledge are created and then replicated in time and space through commensal ethics and exchange . . . In this type of exchange, history, knowledge, feeling, and the senses become embedded in the material culture and its components: specific artefacts, places and performances.*[62]

The conservation has considerably changed the attitude of local people towards the meaning of old architecture. Traditional domestic spaces used to be looked upon as old-fashioned dwellings and often left abandoned. Nowadays, these same properties, mostly owned and inhabited by Archaniotes who chose to take advantage of the program's favourable terms, stand as the symbol of a remarkable local past; they are largely incorporated into the notion of a collective history worth not only remembering but also re-experiencing.

Lela Papadaki, a local farmer in her sixties, asserted:

> *Today Archaniotes tend to include all old stones in their houses, and even the new buildings follow the old style: stone-built walls, yards, enclosures; the least people do is using stone as a coating material . . . We personally refurbished our two small houses (metohakia) in the countryside: they are now without plaster so that the old stones (pelekia) can be seen.*

Stone offers a metaphor for the materiality of an important past, both individual and collective.[63] The preservation and valorization of stone has the function of "memorializing" the

61 See, e.g., Kalantzis 2019.
62 Seremetakis 1996, 99–100.
63 Cf. Tilley 2004.

past of the village and reminding everyone, particularly Archaniotes, of the importance of their own heritage (Fig. 41). As Casey observes, commemoration is something "thoroughly communal;"[64] the preserved dwellings, although privately owned, are bearers of the social memory and collective history of the village. It is not surprising, therefore, that the *body metaphor*[65] is here used to illustrate the special significance of old Archaniote houses. Such a trope is so powerful in Archanes that all stone constructions become bodies proud of their creators—as some Archaniote folklorists put it.[66] Like human beings, they grow "wise" because of the countless stories they "hear" from and about people's lives and deaths, even though for many years the old stones and their stories have languished beneath layers of plaster.

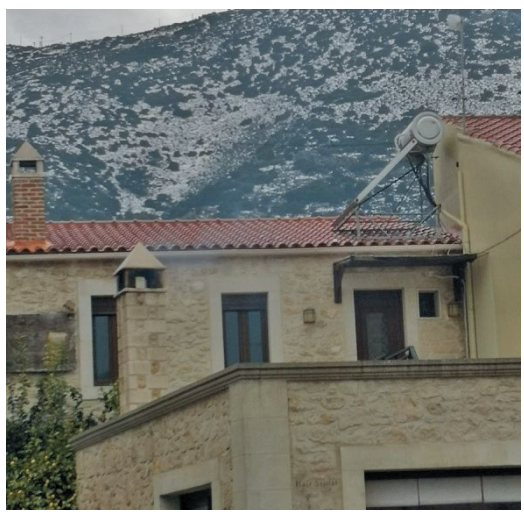

Fig. 41 A private house recently restored. Note the modern use of stone. (Photo by the author)

Fig. 42 The "rediscovery "of a traditional material: stone works as part of the conservation program. (Source: Former Municipality of Archanes)

The re-appreciation of stone at a local level had two collateral consequences: the revival of the almost forgotten professions of stonecutter and stone builder (Fig. 42), and an increasing demand for handmade objects. As often happens with old objects discarded from everyday use (e.g. antique furniture),[67] their re-appearance in contemporary contexts "under a

64 Casey 1987, 217.
65 Tilley 1999, 45.
66 Doundoulaki 1996, 17–18.
67 See Mavrayianni 1999.

layer of dust accumulated with time"[68] is imbued with strong and sometimes new meanings (Fig. 43, Fig. 44).

Fig. 43 An old house wine-press transformed into a living room. (Source: Doundoulaki-Oustamanolaki 1996, 54)

Fig. 44 Stone furniture at the court of an Archaniote house. (Source: Doundoulaki-Oustamanolaki 1996, 55)

My discussions with Archaniotes revealed that their stories about the architectural heritage and the revived traditions of the village are often linked to local *archaeological* heritage. Most stories are intertwined with personal, family, and community reminiscences: the actions of some respectful citizens, the work of local cultural institutions, the cultural activity of the local school in the past and present, the donations to the local council, the visits of some significant politicians, and even the illicit trade of antiquities by some villager peers. What is more, narrations often revolve around kinship relations—happy or unhappy marriages, significant or poor dowries, family prestige and personal values, judgements and statements. It appears that these tales rely on a complex network of social relationship involving different actors, in which the individual and the collective are inextricably linked.

For example, the memories of Mrs. Gemenaki, a woman born around 1920, validate the current fame of Archanes as a place of great antiquity and archaeological importance. For her, the past of the village is linked to the reputation of her family's restaurant, where Sir Arthur Evans used to eat back in the 1920s. The antiquities she remembers belonged in Minoan times to "the Palace of Archanes," which now attracts the attention of visitors and great scholars alike. In her narration, Mrs. Gemenaki connects different periods of Archanes—the Minoan age, the 1920s, and the present—in much the same way she assembles the different parts of the ancient building at Tourkogitonia, whose image is located, literally and metaphorically, at the intersection of official history and family memories:

68 See supra n. 65.

Evans was a very frequent visitor in Archanes. In those times, there were neither restaurants nor tavernas in the area. "Miriofito" was the only one and it was renowned all over Greece; even more, it was renowned abroad.

. . . Evans was here before 1925, but it was that year when we got to know him. I was a little child at that time; I had not even started school, that's for sure. He was a frequent visitor . . . we assume now that he knew that there were a lot of antiquities in Archanes. He most certainly knew that . . . [. . .]

Once my mom told me—I was a little child then: "Marika, let's go to Tourkogitonia to see the antiquities found there."

And we went there and we saw . . . well, a house and its walls were torn apart. Of course, now there are modern houses built on that site, built by some ladies, their maiden name is [. . .]*; well, they built the houses on top of the ancient site. At that time, it was not forbidden to build on those sites like it is today, and those women did. And I told Mr. Yannis* [Sakellarakis] *all about that and he told me "You are the first one to have seen those antiquities." It was like a big house, as big as a threshing court, or a wine press; sure this is how it was. And it seems that it was covered afterwards and the [modern] house was built on top of it. But I do remember. And it is still underneath the house . . .*

Another old, illiterate Archaniote woman recalls her only visit to the archaeological site of Vathypetro (see above Fig. 15) with a group of foreigners which occurred some years before. In her description, archaeological information is mixed with her knowledge of the therapeutic qualities of oil and wine and their sacred meaning in Christian faith. The woman confirms that this sort of old wisdom derives from ancient times through references to the herbs growing on Mt. Juktas. The discovery of carbonized herbs in the palatial building excavations has recently led to the assumption that the collection, use, and perhaps export of herbs was a common practice in Minoan times. As mentioned above, the interpretation of Minoan remains includes the "landscaping" of the site with modern clay vases containing local herbs. My informant bemoans the indifference of contemporary people towards these herbs, which, since the days of Vathypetro, were used by traditional doctors in Archanes. She affirms that she became pregnant with her son thanks to the herbs of Mt. Juktas, which she took upon advice of an Archaniote midwife (*palaini mami*). Ascribing the mountain's flora, the properties of "scientific medicines," she goes on to say that "even scientists in Athens and a doctor working at Ippokration [a hospital in Athens] recognize that, as long as Juktas exists, we shouldn't take any other medicines for certain illnesses" (*και η επιστήμη σήμερα το αναγνωρίζει να μην παίρνουμε φάρμακα αφού υπάρχει ο Γιούχτας*). The woman reinforces her personal attitude towards illness through a selection of pieces of specific historical information, received in one way or another from people with different degrees of authority: doctors, archaeologists, wise old midwives, and even the foreign tourists who visited the site of Vathypetro with her to learn about Minoan oil and wine.

Ideas about the archaeological past have become, in some cases, an integral part of the everyday life of Archaniotes. For instance, the bulk of memories of Mrs. Papadaki, a farmer, revolve around a few specific objects, which she wants to show me: an old clay jug for the transport of wine, an ancient lamp used before the arrival of electricity, and the upper floor of her neoclassical house. A world of embodied historical knowledge emerges in her narration: the material culture of "traditional Archanes," much like that of her childhood and family past, is uncompromisingly related to Minoan objects. The clay jars we see at Knossos "were made and still are made by the potters of Thrapsano," she says;[69] the metal lamp she has kept as a memory of pre-electricity times is "similar to those that replaced the clay lamps used since Minoan times." Even some specific localities that she associates with her family past are linked to the Archaniote traditions and official knowledge about the Minoan period:

> *Right here, where the school is built, there used to be a stone-pit (petrokopio) and they had carved basins where to put the grapes, press them, and collect the must. Back then in Minoan times they also had vineyards and produced wine here. And we all know that there were storehouses in Minoan palaces.* [. . .]
>
> *My father used to have three wine presses here . . . and there were barrels all around the place and he used jugs to get the wine, like the one I showed you. And whatever was left of the wine, he used it to make raki in six large jars, earthen jars, just like the ones you see at* [the palace of] *Knossos.*

Mrs. Papadaki's narration shows how ideas about the archaeological past have become, in some instances, integral to everyday life in Archanes. Her observations exemplify the transformation of collective rhetoric—similar to the rhetoric of Greek nationalism about the ancient past—into a personal narrative built upon reminiscences of embodied experiences and aspects of local history. The very materiality of this personal and collective heritage has stimulated a more pervasive revitalization of the Archaniote identity. As a result, idealized conceptions of ancient history have entered the domain of people's everyday lives. Antiquities—which are of unquestionable national and sacred value, yet usually perceived as distant and abstract—here have discursively transcended the state-controlled space of

69 Thrapsano is a village located 32 km south of Heraklion; it is famous for its pottery, especially the large clay jars (*pitharia*) used until the 1950s in Crete as storage vessels. In the last decades, the art of jar-making has been revived in Thrapsano, as jars are now used for decoration purposes and seem indispensable in most representations of traditional Cretan households (see Fig. 30 and Fig. 44). As a consequence, potters have now returned to Thrapsano, and there they have founded their professional associations. Some cultural activities organized annually celebrate the similarities between the Thrapsaniote *pitharia* and the famous Minoan jars.

excavated land plots to enter in the form of regular performances[70] the realm of social interactions, due to the strong ties they keep with the "lived" past of the village.

We can see how, in the narrative of my informants, the uncovered *pelekia* in restored houses, i.e. the blocks of stone worked by the honoured Archaniote masters (Fig. 45), are linked to the fine masonry of the Minoan "palatial building" at Tourkogitonia (Fig. 46). In

Fig. 45 Uncovered *pelekia* (stone frames) in a restored house opposite the Archaeological Museum of Archanes highlight the importance of the local conservation program. (Photo by the author)

Fig. 46 Masonry from the Minoan palatial building of Archanes, often connected to the use of stone in modern local houses. (Photo by the author)

much the same way, the fine handicrafts created by Archaniote women in the 20th century are linked to the ancient objects discovered at Fourni (Fig. 47a and b); the famed grapes still grown by Archaniote farmers, to the Minoan wine press unearthed at Vathypetro; the therapeutic qualities of Mt. Juktas herbs, to the carbonized herbs discovered in the Minoan palatial building; the festival at the church of the Transfiguration of Christ on Mt. Juktas, to the activities of the ancient pilgrims who, in Minoan times, used to reach the mountain sanctuary on the backs of donkeys to practice their religious rituals.

These associations may not differ much from those found in several other places that have embraced cultural tourism, nor from the well-established nationalistic narrative of Greek folklorists, who have long stressed the ancient pedigree of many local customs. Yet, it is worth noticing how these conceptualizations of heritage can generate new discourses

70 Cf. Haldrup and Bærenholdt 2015.

Fig. 47 A local lady presenting family heirlooms at her place as examples of collective Archaniote heritage. (Photos by the author)

and statements about the meaning of local identity. These are materialized not only as communal spaces under the jurisdiction of individuals with political or scientific authority, but also in the domain of private life, as people's personal choices.

This phenomenon explains why, twelve years after the first implementation of the program, many have continued to restore their houses in the old style without any subsidy or financial aid from the municipality, the state, or the European Union. Domestic spaces and items that do not serve current needs, such as wine presses, are kept in the interior of the houses as tangible memories of both personal and collective history. When old rooms are transformed into extra bedrooms, attractive living rooms, or other domestic spaces, the once displaced stone objects belonging to these spaces, e.g. pieces of furniture, water basins, vessels, and hand mills for the grinding of wheat, are being re-incorporated into new forms (see above Fig. 43 and 44, also Fig. 48a and b). Many of these objects, until recently considered to be on par with folklore museum pieces, have new phases added to their "biographies,"[71] as they are re-appropriated as family heirlooms. Moreover, what is held to be the "traditional aesthetic," imitating—with or without success—the old architectural style, has been adopted in most local shops and even in the more recent "neo-traditional" residences that Archaniotes have built for their children. Thus, people's houses in Archanes have been restored together with their family past(s). Metaphors of kinship, thoroughly implicated in the transmission of property from one generation to the next, have found a practical and

71 See supra n. 48.

Fig. 48 Cretan clay jars decorating a public space and a modern hotel bar. (Photos by the author)

symbolic expression here through the inclusion of inherited objects in local people's lives as well as the interest Archaniotes show in bequeathing them, both literally and metaphorically, to future generations.

Finally, the Archaniote rural landscape is being gradually (but still slowly) turned into a spectacle, a tradition-bound "visual pleasure," whose ancestry appears to trace back to Minoan times (Fig. 49a and b). This operation entails much more than methods of agricultural economy and people's hard work, since it evokes aesthetic values and even social virtues.[72] Moreover, as long as landscape views are linked to enjoyment through multiple senses, not only sight but also smell and taste, they seem to be an appropriate setting for visitors and Archaniotes as well to experience tradition (Fig. 50a and b). This conclusion is confirmed by Raphael Samuel, who writes that the ruling passions of each period—in this case the aesthetic enjoyment of historical landscapes—are deeply impressed on "traditional forms," especially those presented as timeless and unaltered.[73]

It is in this spirit that Mrs. Fanouraki, an Archaniote retired teacher, bought a house in the countryside, just next to the archaeological site of Vathypetro. In the tiny settlement nearby, with fewer than 20 houses, Mrs. Fanouraki and her husband enjoy the silence, peacefulness, and beauty of an "ancient landscape" of hillsides and endless cultivated fields. As the couple affirms, the view from the house "of four provinces of the county is quintessentially Cretan, and Archaniote in particular."

72 See Hirsch and O'Hanlon 1995; Bender 2002; cf. Solomon 2006 on the social significance of the landscape of Knossos.

73 Samuel 1994, x.

Fig. 49 The Archaniote landscape as a (personal) spectacle. (Photos by the author)

Fig. 50 Experiencing authenticity, Cretan hospitality and local dishes at an Archaniote tavern. (Photos by the author)

The hamlet of Vathypetro, near Archanes, was once a very poor locality, and the two families who used to live there eventually moved to the main village in the early 1960s. With the decision of the Fanourakis and a few other people to buy and restore the handful of houses in Vathypetro, the hamlet has returned to life. In 2002, a local cultural association was founded. During the festival of the local church's saint in the same year, many Archaniotes went to Vathypetro to celebrate the event, make their good wishes to the new residents, and attend the speech of local folklorists—all this under the light of a small electrical generator, since the settlement was abandoned before the introduction of electricity.

Being aware of the meaning and value of old Cretan handicrafts, the couple decorated their new house in Cretan style: "We have made all decoration look Cretan," (*κάναμε όλη*

τη διακόμηση κρητικιά)—they point out. Besides choosing only stone and wood as building materials, they brought several old objects inherited from their parents, some of which Mrs. Fanouraki had planned to donate to the local folklore museum—except that at the last moment she decided to keep them to furnish the new country house.

The nearby antiquities of Vathypetro are perceived as a fundamental starting point in the history of the area. The Archaniote couple considers them as the beginning of a long evolution which includes, among other things, the impressive visual patchwork of vineyards and olive groves that surround the site. The heart of the place beats in its landscape, its source of wealth since ancient times. Today, it is being offered as a pleasure to those who can appreciate its ceaseless cultural value.

The rural-urban character of the Archaniote economy and social organization facilitated the accommodation of a new cultural idiom, for which the reproduction of specific aspects of the past to the detriment of others comes to be regarded as a matter of personal and/or collective choice, deeply affecting people's lifestyle.[74] All actors involved contribute to the shaping of this new cultural reality: the local authorities, first and foremost the mayor, by "rooting" the (European-funded) future of the village in its past; the people from other places, who settle in this "appealing place;" the citizens of Heraklion and the cultural tourists, whom the recent tradition-focused enterprises target; the scientists who take part in local heritage projects and conferences; and, undoubtedly, also the European Union, the supporter of many local initiatives. By emphasizing some aspects of this new cultural reality while underplaying some others, all of them contribute, in different ways, to the consolidation of new cultural forms and representations; in other words, they shape and often are shaped themselves by what Parmentier calls "signs *of* history which are also signs *in* history"[75] in a quickly shifting present.

Counter-discourses on the meaning of tradition

Local narratives on tradition and its relation to the conservation program are not unanimously accepted. Although most Archaniotes acknowledge the efforts of scientists and local authorities towards the preservation of local heritage, some point out that what we think of and reproduce as "traditional" did not necessarily exist in the past that we want to revive. As an Archaniote painter told me while complaining about the colors of restored houses, in Archanes "lots of things look 'traditionalish' rather than traditional."

Yannis Ventourakis, a young merchant and the owner of a shop in the heart of the village, restored his paternal house in the Archaniote spirit, in compliance with a set of colors, ma-

74 See Giddens 1994.
75 Parmentier 1987.

terials, and decorative elements that recall the old style of local architecture. Nevertheless, he believes that the use that has been made of European funds for the purposes of material conservation was, especially in public spaces, "superficial" (*vitrina,* that is, a "display window"); in practice, the result "disorientates" the villagers:

> *What tradition? Can you see anything traditional?* [. . .]
>
> *All this is but a façade. Archanes was a rich rural area and now some people intend to ruin it. So much money is being spent just to show off, just for renovations and tavernas and the like but in appearance only. And when all of this is over, there will be no money, not even to restore the stones that have already started to break.*

Ventourakis questions the local interpretation of tradition, as he believes there is more to it than the colors of houses and the stone-paved squares. The problem to face, he argues, is not so much that of house renovation but the decline of viticulture, which for him constitutes "the real tradition of the village." He contends that the funds allocated by the European Union should be used to support Archaniote farmers rather than "to beautify houses." In reality, the support of the EU has had the effect of valorising and simultaneously undermining the Archaniote traditions. On the one hand, it subsidized old architecture, traditional activities, and "historical aesthetics" while on the other hand, through its Common Agricultural Policies, it reduced the support to small-scale farming in the Mediterranean as a part of a new international agricultural market strategy.

In the eyes of the people who look at the conservation program through the lens of their own economic situation, what is being promoted as local "cultural upgrading" brings benefits only to those who "exploit tradition." Maria Xanthaki, an Archaniote woman in her late sixties, always very sensitive about and actively engaged in the subject of community welfare, claims that the so-called "upgrading of Archanes" should have been accompanied by the improvement of local economic conditions. She declares to be against a potential turn of the village towards tourism, and rhetorically asks whether "by making Archanes an 'extended tavern,' the place will recover [from the economic crisis]" (*Όμως, με το να γίνει μία ταβέρνα η Αρχάνα θα ορθοποδήσει;*)

Therefore, practical economic factors are related to and implicated in, the cultural revival of Archanes. This does not mean, however, that the rationale for the conservation program is to be found in the decline of agricultural activities. Yet, taking pride in the famous rosaki grape (although it is no longer cultivated) or expressing fondness for the "timeless" Archaniote landscape and its agricultural practices, which supposedly remained almost unaltered since Minoan times (whereas now these methods are declining and the surrounding landscape is spotted with modern constructions), is perhaps a phenomenon which follows the same rationale as the (re)discovery of the past and its value. Presenting a society as tradition-bound is a discursive attitude; thereby, common practices are turned into sym-

bolic entities and lose their secured habitual character. In confronting their society and its past, people "substantivize" it[76] and "need to obtain information . . . about the nature of what was supposedly . . . their own."[77] In other words, as they enter the logic of a "post-traditional" society,[78] there is a transition from "practices and ideas which are simply done or thought, or simply take place, [to] those set up as definite entities to be reflected upon and manipulated by the people."[79] Within this logic, tradition gradually becomes a matter of conscious choice, personal and collective, often dependent upon the replications of meaning found by people in past material forms.

The common point in most criticism of the village's "upgrading" is neither the rejection of tradition as irrelevant to modern people's lives, nor the contestation of the actual value of architectural restoration; people rather contest the lack of support to what is considered the "real" traditions of Archanes, that is, its high-quality agricultural production and the moral values of its people.

As Mrs. Xanthaki asserted:

> *Our people have been here since ancient times. Minoans were peaceful; they loved their homeland, and they were progressive. What about us? We have the means to progress and we have to do it the same way as our ancestors. But what do we do? We deviate and act like people do in America* [. . .] *The American way of life has been established here. Have our customs and traditions been maintained? Archanes is now unrecognisable!* [. . .] *In our neighbourhood people used to come out of their houses and sit together with other people and talk about their work in the fields, about their problems that they could share with each other; they used to help each other. Nowadays we are more and more alienated.* [. . .] *We don't respect or love each other anymore, as we used to do in the past.*

Among all symbolic references to local heritage, the Minoan past of Archanes seems to stand as a binding force, for it encapsulates the idea of Archaniote progress, open-mindedness, hospitality, and love for the homeland; it also seems to resonate with people's sense of morality and many of their customs. This suggests that, in a period of increasing individualism—marked by alienation and indifference to local values—ideas about a mythicized past may function, at least for some residents, as an important, specifically local, model-inspiring action for a better future. Remarkably, these ideas are known and retrieved exclusively through material remains.

76 Thomas 1992.
77 Thomas 1992, 72.
78 Giddens 1994; cf. Dovey 1985.
79 Thomas 1992, 64.

Conclusions

We are simultaneously bearers and makers of history, with discursive representations of pastness as one element in th[e] generation and reproduction of social life.[80]

Persons make things and things make persons.[81]

In Archanes, two material dimensions of the local past meet and operate together: one is represented by the restored houses, the other by the archaeological discoveries. The first is associated with the economic prosperity brought on by agriculture in the first decades of the 20th century, a time that local people remember vividly. The second is associated with the historical importance of the village in specific fields since the Bronze Age. Each of these "material worlds" explains the other, and both inform the present. As for the "biography" of the most delicate of all Archaniote "objects," i.e. its rural landscape, the survival of significant elements of material culture dating from both periods has the power to "objectify" local agricultural history and aesthetic ideals; consequently, these aspects are encapsulated in a very comprehensive notion of tradition.

By examining the processes of negotiation of Archaniote heritage, I have attempted to show that the meanings attributed to the material culture(s) of the Minoan era on one side, and of the period prior to World War II on the other, are interrelated and interdependent. I have also highlighted how the little-known and little-visited archaeological remains discovered in the area have gained social significance due to their correlation—social, symbolic, and aesthetic—to the extensive program of conservation of architecture and public spaces undertaken between the 1990s and early 2000s. It has also been argued that the program has led to the monumentalization (though not to the "museification") of local environments through the restoration of private properties and "authentically traditional" living spaces. This occurrence has changed not only the image of Archanes but also its significance in the eyes of all those who have a bond with this place, especially the neighbouring Herakliotes, other Cretans, and, to a lesser extent, an increasing number of visitors.

The narratives of Archaniotes relating to tradition and the perceived relevance of the Minoan past in the life of the village are largely based on a convergence of individual and social memories. These two dimensions of memory are mutually mediated: in Archanes, the remembrance of one's family past tends to be seen through the lens of what is considered a collective history with specific material manifestations. As long as ownership is not affected by the measures for material conservation (at least, no more than it was before the

80 Tonkin 1992, 97.
81 Tilley 2004, 217.

beginning of the project), the "idiom of the family"—the logic of descent associated with the inheritance of material property as Margaret Kenna and many researchers have noticed in the Greek society[82]—found in Archanes a symbolic ground for development. Within this framework, material culture has played an active role. The memories many of my informants retain of their childhood, their families, their social and patriotic acts, and other personal experiences are now mediated through the appropriation of the village's widely publicized heritage; the latter goes as far as to include, next to the admired works of the villagers' fathers and grandfathers, the material legacy of Minoan Archaniotes—a remarkable and tangible sign of the influence of this ancient civilization on the village.

What makes the "Archaniote case" special in the Greek context is not merely the unusual approach of local people towards the ancient material heritage—overall quite a positive one, since their property rights have been hardly affected by the new measures—but also the ideological implications of conservation. By casting ideas on antiquity into the logic of a "post-traditional" society, whereby the approach to tradition becomes a matter of personal and collective choice, the conservation program was able to reshape the nationalistic discourse on the past at a local level. Moreover, unlike other places in Greece, where the evocation of antiquity is often linked to ideas about the cultural and historical superiority of the country as the "cradle of national and Western ideals," in Archanes this rhetoric partakes of a socially experienced time and space, in which the appeal to the ancient past serves the cultural, economic, and social interests of today's village.

In fact, Archanes represents an interesting example of a broader phenomenon, that of the cultural emergence of localities on the global scene.[83] The Archaniote conceptualization of the past as materialized in heritage assets should be understood as a part of a global system of practices and beliefs promoting (and producing) cultural differences on a small spatial scale. In the last decade, such differences are also used in order to emphasize the neglect Archaniotes feel after the administrative change brought with the "Kallikratis" division in 2011. Despite the acknowledged historic and cultural importance of Archanes, the seat of the newly founded "Municipality of Archanes/Asterousia" is no longer located in Archanes but in the "indifferent" and "culturally insignificant" little town of Peza in Central Crete. Perhaps more successfully than any other place on the island, Archanes has been able to appropriate a global order of things and modulate a specifically local response to it. It is also important to keep in mind that the debate on Archaniote heritage, founded as it is upon the concepts and values of "Europeanness," transcends national boundaries. The European awards, the EU's commitment to financing and promoting local material culture and activities, the arrival of European tourists interested in all things Archaniote, e.g. cultural expressions, landscapes, and agricultural products, all contribute to shaping a different re-

82 Kenna 1976; Just 1998, 337.
83 See Appadurai 1995.

lationship of this locale to Europe at large. Local knowledge produces reliably local subjects and neighbourhoods "within which such subjects can be recognized and are organized," as Appadurai argues.[84] Here, this knowledge places local identity in new discursive contexts: as long as the village has something special to offer in the cultural palimpsest of European localities, it keeps *producing* Archanes as a distinct locality on a regional, national and international scale.

Finally, although tradition is usually thought of as being in opposition to modernity—and this was certainly the case in Greece, where old-style and "backward" material forms have been largely contrasted to the idea of a fanciful, much desired European-style progress[85]—the example of Archanes shows that in practice these two notions can also complement each other. This relationship of complementarity does not merely lay upon rhetorical and usually abstract claims of generational continuities between past and present communities, but also upon the very materiality of living forms of heritage. In local, regional, and tourist discourses, the nexus between past and present projects an image of the village as the "most authentic" and at the same time "most European" place on the island. The "introverted and ugly village of 30 years ago" is being transformed into an "appealing village to visit and to live in," showing exactly how material culture, as embedded within specific social and economic dynamics, has the power to affect the way people act and think for and about themselves.

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84 Appadurai 1997, 181.
85 See Tsoukalas 1998.

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