

INTERVIEW

A conversation with Alain Schnapp

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Introduction

On 13 November 2017, Yannis Hamilakis, Felipe Rojas, and several other archaeologists at Brown University engaged in a conversation with Alain Schnapp about his life and career. Hamilakis and Rojas were interested in learning about how Schnapp's early academic and political interests intersected with the history of Classics and classical archaeology in France, Europe and elsewhere in the world, and also about the origins and current aims of Schnapp's work on the history of archaeology and antiquarianism and the cross-cultural history of ruins. Schnapp and his interlocutors began by discussing Schnapp's formative years and the intersections between archaeology and politics in mid-20th-century France. Their conversation turns to the role of individual scholars, specifically classicists and archaeologists, in the momentous social events in Paris in 1968. The final part of the dialogue concerns Schnapp's contributions to the history of archaeology and the possibilities of engaging in the comparison of antiquarian traditions.

What follows is a condensed and edited transcription of that conversation with minimal bibliography.

The formative years

Yannis Hamilakis: *Alain has had a long and distinguished career as a classical archaeologist: he has done pioneering work on the iconography of ancient Greek vases, on the concept of the hunt (Schnapp 1997a), on the history of ruins, and on other topics. His career reflects the remarkable dynamism of French academics, and specifically of French archaeologists and classicists, during the mid- to late 20th century A.D. He was part of an innovative intellectual community in France that could be labelled 'the Paris school of classical studies'. But we begin with Alain's formative years – his education, influences and intellectual development: why did you decide to become an archaeologist in the first place?*

Alain Schnapp: I think what motivated me was a kind of questioning about the past, a kind of attraction to the Greek past, to the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey* – it was a class I took when I was ten years old; this incited my interest in the classical world and the material past.

I was lucky because in the *gymnasium* I attended I met a group of boys – at that moment in France, boys and girls were separated. One of those boys was the son of a collector of archaeological books, who lived in the *quartier Latin* and had a wonderful bookshop. When we were fifteen or sixteen, we would go there to look at his books and in that wonderful place we encountered all sorts of interesting people

Figure 1. Alain Schnapp giving keynote address at the *Otros pasados: ontologías alternativas en el estudio del pasado* conference, 23 April 2017, Universidad de Los Andes, Bogotá, Colombia.



who taught at the nearby Sorbonne. A man who had a strong influence on me was a German Jewish refugee, Hans Georg Pflaum, who was the founder of modern epigraphy in France. He came from the University of Berlin, and he encouraged us to go to Germany. (Can you imagine Germany in the 1960s? The country was in flux after the war; direct contact between France and German culture had been almost lost). At any rate, Pflaum encouraged young boys like me to go to Germany and to experience a completely different kind of field archaeology. When I was still in my last year at school, I went to the excavation in Novaesium which was led by the Landesmuseum in Bonn. This was part of a much bigger programme of excavation that effectively transformed the landscape of Roman Germany. In France at that time, field archaeology was taught only to anthropologists working on prehistory. I took my first classes in field archaeology with André Leroi-Gourhan, the French post-war prehistorian who had a field approach to archaeology. In fact, the excavation at Pincevent which he directed was the first open-air Palaeolithic site discovered in France. It was a moment of great interest and it afforded me an opportunity to become familiar with new techniques of field archaeology.

So it was the German courses on the one hand, and these anthropological experiences with Leroi-Gourhan on the other, that led to my being interested in field archaeology. At that time, if you were enrolled at the Sorbonne, archaeology was not an important discipline. You had to go to the Institute of Art and Archaeology to attend proper classes in archaeology. The curriculum at the Sorbonne, which was based on German and British as well as Italian models, was strong on art-historical facts – numismatics, epigraphy, these kinds of things – but field archaeology and field archaeological interpretation were absolutely not taught. At the Sorbonne we had to follow a curriculum in history. But this was interesting, because we had to attend lectures on Byzantine and Islamic – not only on Western – history, and this gave us a broad general vision. Afterwards, you could take classes in archaeology, and I decided to do that. But I became very disillusioned by the level of archaeological education in France: the approach was simplistic.

Elsewhere in Paris, and specifically at the *Ecole pratique des hautes études*, however, the academic environment was very different. This was a moment in which I had the chance to get in touch with

Jean-Pierre Vernant, Marcel Detienne and Pierre Vidal-Naquet: a group of scholars who completely changed the face of Classics in France. It was the beginning of the Centre de recherches comparées sur les sociétés anciennes which developed a comparative approach the origins of which can be found in the French sociological school, in Marcel Mauss – Vernant himself, in fact, was a direct pupil of Mauss – and Louis Gernet. Gernet was a distinguished professor of Greek who, before the war, had been the dean of the French University in Algiers. He was engaged in the radical rethinking of the classical tradition. For instance, he was the first to use the word ‘anthropology’ in relation to ancient texts. So, before the First World War, you had Mauss at the head, then you had Gernet, and after the Second World War, you had Vernant.

As you know, the structure of the University of Paris is extremely complex, much more complex than even Cambridge and Oxford, because there are many different institutions within it. It was compulsory to attend lectures at the Sorbonne, but you could also attend lectures in several different institutions, like the Collège de France or the Ecole pratique des hautes études. The latter is solely a research institution, in the model of the German seminar. It was purposely created at the time of Napoleon III by Victor Duruy, who was the minister of education in France at this time. The idea was that a professor at the Ecole pratique des hautes études only had to give one seminar weekly of pure research. There were no diplomas. It was clear for us that, with all the strangeness of the tradition at the Sorbonne, the Ecole pratique was a place in which we could actually learn. Not only from Vernant, Vidal-Naquet and Detienne, but at that time you also had Jacques Le Goff and Fernand Braudel. Indeed, the late 1960s were the apex of French structuralism, and also the apex of a new social history and a new economic history.

YH: *Was ever there any doubt that you would go into classical archaeology? Did you ever consider going into other fields?*

AS: With this German experience and also as a result of discussions with colleagues, I was more interested in field archaeology than in classical archaeology. At first, I considered going into Roman provincial archaeology or protohistory; in other words, into Celtic archaeology. But when I had the chance to hear Vernant and Vidal-Naquet, I decided to remain in Classics because Vernant was extraordinary. Prehistory had no real place in French academic institutions. In Paris we had the Ethnographic School and Leroi-Gourhan, and in Bordeaux we had the Geological School and François Bordes. But protohistory, the Neolithic and the Iron Age were not taught. They were only taught in Strasbourg and Besançon. There was no chair and no teaching in these fields in Paris before 1968, but after the student insurrection, the old Faculté des lettres was organized into independent centres, and there were then possibilities to teach disciplines that had not been taught previously.

1968: intellectual and political synergies in France

YH: *You’ve mentioned two important developments: one is the so-called ‘Vernant school’ and the second is political and social upheaval linked to May 1968. Both of them are of interest to us. Shall we start with the first? What made that intellectual development as important as it was for*

France, and also, more broadly, for ancient studies? Was it the tradition of Marcel Mauss and Lévi-Strauss?

AS: This was the tradition of Mauss with some kind of Marxism; Vidal-Naquet was never a Marxist, nor was Detienne. But Vernant came quite clearly from a Marxist education.

YH: *Was he a member of the French Communist Party at the time?*

AS: He was. He entered the French Communist Party in 1933 as a student. But Vernant was not only that, he was a man who had liberated the city of Toulouse during the Second World War. So he was engaged in the Resistance and he became a commander. His *nom de guerre* was Colonel Berthier and he was the head of the resistance movement in Toulouse. Toulouse was the only city that was liberated by the Partisans. And Vernant was a man who did that with his teacher at the Sorbonne, the famous Ignace Meyerson, again, a pupil of Mauss. Involvement in the Resistance on the part of Vernant and opposition to the Algerian War on the part of Vidal-Naquet were the two seminal political-ideological events which had a huge impact on ancient studies in France in the 1960s and 1970s. Vidal-Naquet was vice president of the board of *Verité liberté. Cahiers d'information sur la guerre d'Algérie*, which was one of the publications that reported on the actions of the French army against the Algerians during the Algerian War. And he had been in charge of the defence of Maurice Audin, a French professor of mathematics and a member of the Algerian Communist Party, who was killed by French parachutists. This point is important because the army produced a false report on the alleged escape attempt of Maurice Audin. And Vidal-Naquet in 1959 published a thorough historical criticism of the army report on this fabricated escape attempt, which had been used to justify the death of Audin.

YH: *That is interesting because Vidal-Naquet, as far as I know, maintained a dual career: he was writing his studies on ancient society – very influential, very important (see Hartog et al. 1998) – and at the same time he was writing a series of books that were explicitly political, starting with the Algerian War and continuing with other topics (e.g. Vidal-Naquet 1972; 1975; 1989).*

AS: The first book on the Algerian War was *Les crimes de l'armée française* (Vidal Naquet 1975); after that, he embarked in the 1970s on a series of books dedicated to combating the denial of the Holocaust (Vidal Naquet 1987). The revisionists were active at this time in Paris, in America and France, and Vidal-Naquet was the main intellectual opponent.

YH: *You worked closely with Vidal-Naquet.*

AS: Yes. In 1968 the Sorbonne was occupied, and one of the problems was that the Sorbonne is itself a very big monument. Thus the risks of looting, of major damage and injury, were great. So the group of students and professors who had occupied the Sorbonne at this time created a kind of internal structure to protect the Sorbonne. And Vidal-Naquet, Daniel Roche, Jacques Julliard and Emmanuel Leroy Ladurie – all these people who had such an extraordinary influence on the development of French history – were there. At the end of the process, towards the end of May, beginning of June, when the Sorbonne was evacuated, Jacques Julliard (who was the editor of the French Catholic press *Le Seuil*, a press which was very involved in the battle against the Algerian

War also) asked us to publish a chronicle with the title *Journal de la commune étudiante* (Schnapp and Vidal-Naquet 1969). This was translated into English as the *French student uprising* by Maria Jolas, another interesting figure (Schnapp and Vidal-Naquet 1971).

YH: *Was that report an account of the uprising?*

AS: It was partially that, but more interestingly, it was a collection of more than 700, 800 leaflets produced by students, with a kind of epigraphic commentary. Vidal-Naquet, who was well trained in epigraphy, tried to create the intellectual framework of the work.

YH: *So it was a contemporary archaeology of May 1968?*

AS: We could say that but it was mostly an extraordinary collection of manifestos which were produced by the students of the Ecole des beaux arts. The book was published six months after the events – to collaborate with Vidal-Naquet, to collect and to comment on these events was an extraordinary opportunity.

YH: *You were then a graduate student – talking about May 1968, what do you think was the major impact of that event on scholarship more generally, but also, specifically, in relation to Classics and classical archaeology?*

AS: I think the period from the 1960s to the 1980s was the apex of humanistic scholarship; a new agenda for the humanities was established in France. I am not a nationalist, but when I retrospectively look at that moment, it's incredible how many figures were teaching in Paris then: Georges Duby, Lévi-Strauss, Braudel. So in any field of the humanities one could meet most of the best people of their generation. This is not connected with 1968; it is connected with a kind of revenge of the French intellectuals after the war. You know, I mean the failure of the 1930s, when the *Année sociologique*, which was a journal that tried to create a new, general human science, was defeated by the political condition of pre-war France. All these people had some experience of resistance, imprisonment or exile: the exile of Lévi-Strauss in America; the detention of Braudel in a prisoners' camp. As you know, Braudel wrote most of his *Méditerranée* (Braudel 1972) in a prisoners' camp during this time. These experiences of resistance, imprisonment and exile were instrumental in shaping this generation. But 1968 was useful in the sense that this older generation established communication with the new one, now with a post-war agenda, after the terrible colonial Algerian War. Because if you look at our history, our experience of history in the 1950s and 1960s, the French had suffered the terrible effects of the German occupation, and the collaborationists and the Pétain regime and the fact that some of the resistance people who were involved in action against the Germans accepted using the same – more or less the same – attitude against the Vietnamese in the war in Vietnam, and against Algerians in the Algerian War.

A major event for the development of French anthropology was that in 1948 Vernant joined the Centre national de la recherche scientifique (CNRS), which was, again, an extraordinary institution. The CNRS still today offers permanent jobs exclusively for research. You can teach, but you have no obligation to teach. And this was a model created by the left alliance, the Front populaire, and by Joliot-Curie – its director after the Second World War – on the model of the Russian Academy of Sciences. People such as Lévi-Strauss were really well known in 1968, although

Vernant not so. This generation, people born between 1915 and 1930, became the dominant school, not only for Classics and geography, but for sociology, anthropology and the humanities. And so the 1968 event was a kind of revival of the *Année sociologique* movement, not on the level of academics but on the level of the general public.

YH: *They were all intellectuals in the broader sense, yes.*

AS: There was another journal of this kind – *Action*, a journal that was created by the 1968 movement. It was very influential in disseminating the ideas of the so-called structuralist movement, which was not a structuralist movement, but part of a general agenda of rewriting the social sciences.

YH: *I have two related questions. The first has to do with the Braudel tradition and more generally the group around the Annales journal. Archaeologists in the Anglo-American world have recently explored and used this tradition, but I was wondering, what was the impact of that grouping of historians involved with the journal – Braudel, of course, but also others, such as the second Annalist generation – on archaeology in France, on classical archaeology more specifically, and on Classics as a broader field? Was there a direct impact or was it mostly mediated by medieval studies?*

AS: There was an indirect impact. I was working with François Hartog in the 1970s and we were approached by Jacques Revel, who was one of the pupils of Braudel, to produce the first issue of *Annales* devoted to ancient history and archaeology. It was well received. In fact, Lucien Febvre and Mark Bloch were a bit ashamed that the *Annales* had a lot of success from the 1930s to the 1960s in modern history, contemporary history and medieval history. And yet most of the ancient historians and the archaeologists in France were not committed to this approach. This is because the formal interpretation and study of the Greek and Roman tradition at this time were done at the French School in Athens, the French School in Rome, the French schools abroad, which were – which are still, I would say – very conservative institutions. There were a few exceptions; one very important one was André Aymard, the professor of ancient history and the dean of the Sorbonne, who was a kind of go-between of the *école des Annales* and the Sorbonne. But he was very isolated in some ways.

YH: *That's very interesting. And a related question has to do with the impact of the Vernant school on archaeology directly, because we can see a major impact on history, ancient historians and philology in some ways, but less so on archaeologists. I mean, you are an exception.*

AS: There were some exceptions, but the influence was partly developed in France with the work of people such as François Lissarrague, for example, who is one of the most important figures of his generation. His work is seminal and the same goes for others such as Claude Bérard, in Lausanne, who was also a field archaeologist who developed a kind of structuralist framework for interpreting the data from his excavations at Eretria. The major impact was on archaeologists in Italy, the school of Bruno d'Agostino in Naples, mainly because Vernant had direct contact with Ettore Lepore, and Lepore was for ancient history and archaeology the most important person in Italian archaeology during the

post-war period. And this was a moment in which Italian archaeology moved from the classical tradition to a more field-oriented and Marxist perspective.

Intellectual and political synergies beyond France

Peter van Dommelen: *You talk about the connection of the Sorbonne with Italy; you make a distinction with the school in Rome there. What struck me was that they were both centred around the Centre Jean Bérard they set up in Naples, so there was actually physical separation in Italy; there was a group in Naples and a group in Rome, which only reinforces the importance of the Ecole française. Can you say a little bit more in general about how this worked?*

AS: So the centre in Naples was created by George Vallet, who was a professor of Latin, and who became interested in ancient economics during his stay in Italy and worked with François Villard, an expert on Greek vases. Villard was a typologist and Vallet was more of an economic historian; at any rate, he tried with the techniques and equipment of those days to create a framework for interpreting the economy of colonial exchange in antiquity. So Vallet went to Lepore, who was professor at the Central University of Naples. And he was very diplomatic; he loved politics. So he created the Centre de Jean Bérard to deal with issues of Greek colonization. The Centre Jean Bérard was a very small institution, and so it communicated easily with the University of Naples, and with the people working in the Soprintendenza. These post-war generations changed the landscape of colonial studies in southern Italy. So in some ways, the Centre de Jean Bérard, being independent from the French School, made it possible to create an interconnection between field archaeologists in France and in Italy, and the school.

PvD: *Precisely; although it has always remained very small, and is perhaps not the most influential research institution, I still think it's one of the more interesting ones.*

YH: *Other than the Italian connection, we can also discuss the American and the British ones. Or at least the key figure here of Moses Finley. Could you talk about the connection between Moses Finley and Vernant and Vidal-Naquet?*

AS: The connection was clearly the Communist and Marxist experience. Finley never clarified whether he was a member of the Communist Party, but it is very clear from his behaviour. The FBI had Finley under surveillance from the 1930s onwards. Daniel Tompkins, who is writing a biography of Finley, and all his Cambridge friends and his Paris friends discovered with amazement his implication in realpolitik. Finley was a secretary of Franz Boas and also a secretary of the American Anti-Fascist Committee, and he organized a visit of Solomon Mikhoels and other Russian intellectuals during the war to raise money for supporting populations in the Soviet Union. And he collected more than 50 million dollars – can you imagine 50 million dollars in the 1940s? And from 1941 to 1944 he worked for the Jewish Committee to organize fundraising strategies. During these years, Finley was spied on by the FBI. But he finally got an interdiction to teach.

- YH: *So was he invited to Paris by Vernant and Vidal-Naquet?*
- AS: No, he was expelled from Rutgers University because of his politics, and it was Arnaldo Momigliano who found him a position in Oxford. Afterwards, he went to Cambridge, but the contact between Vernant and Finley probably goes back to 1956–57, at the moment in which some people in Czechoslovakia created a journal called *Eirene*. And this journal was a kind of space for East and West exchanges. But most of the people from the West were leftists or communists.
- YH: *Was it established as a Classics journal?*
- AS: Yes, and it is still a Classics journal. It was led by the very influential Czech historian Jan Pečírka, who had studied the process of colonization in the Russian Black Sea.
- YH: *My final question has to do with more recent and contemporary French philosophy and its impact on archaeology. As you know, a number of archaeologists read French philosophy from Merleau-Ponty to Foucault and Deleuze and even more recent philosophers. But to what extent did that body of thinking – let's call it post-structuralist thought – have any impact on classical archaeology or archaeology in general in France?*
- AS: Foucault certainly had a strong impact, because as a teacher he was an extraordinarily gifted lecturer – his lectures were fascinating. And his approach, his book on sexuality, for example, had a lot of links with some of the books published by Nicole Loraux or other people at the Centre de recherches comparés sur les sociétés anciennes in Paris. But talking about the impact of post-structuralist thought directly on archaeology, I would say it was none. Most archaeologists remained more involved in a kind of positivist, field- and typology-oriented approach, even if the work of J.P. Demoule, for example, was clearly influenced by more recent philosophical tendencies.
- YH: *Would you say that this is still the case today?*
- AS: No. You had postmodern influence through the contact with Cambridge. You know we had a common seminar in the 1970s, the Cambridge–Paris seminar: Colin Renfrew went to teach in Paris; Ian Hodder went to teach in Paris. There were also a lot of American scholars and we have at this moment a special chair for visitors. So we invited important archaeologists from the United States and from all over the world and Sander van der Leeuw was appointed professor at the Sorbonne.

History of archaeology and comparative antiquarianisms

- Felipe Rojas: *I want to switch gears and jump several decades to talk about The discovery of the past (Schnapp 1993; English edition 1997b). Many of us in this room have read that book with care, and in my case, at least, been inspired by it. I see it as a sort of foundation for the type of work that I'm doing now. I wanted to ask you a double question: when you were writing The discovery of the past, where did you think the book would fit among other histories of archaeology? And second, how do you think the book was received?*
- AS: I first began to write the book as a kind of handbook for my students. And it was the pressure of the editor who asked me to go further, to try to expand the first project. It was a stepping stone for comparative reflection about cultural links between archaeology and general culture. This was

probably connected to the influence of Arnaldo Momigliano, who used to come Paris to speak to us and to invite us to London and who organized a seminar in Pisa. The way in which Momigliano changed the history of classical scholarship was – for me – a model to change the history of classical and even non-classical archaeology (on Momigliano see e.g. Miller 2007).

A second point: I had to review the first edition of Trigger's *History of archaeological thought* (1989; 2nd edn 2006) for Cambridge University Press, and I was critical. Trigger's book is useful, and I would recommend it to any student, but I was surprised by the total lack of philosophical and literary sensibility. Trigger's knowledge of 19th-century and contemporary archaeology was vast, but he completely neglected the role of antiquarianism. So when I used his book with my students, I tried to change it. I wanted to write a history from the first antiquarianism to the rise of modern archaeology. This was my main interest.

FR: *The temporal gap between the two books is narrow: the first edition of Trigger's is 1989, and yours is 1993, no?*

AS: Yes, absolutely. I had the idea of writing a book about archaeology and antiquarianism before Trigger's book was published. I wanted to do so because of the pressure and demand of my own students. At the time, between 1975 and 1980, I made a change in the curriculum and made the history of archaeology a requisite for every student. Any of our 500 undergraduates had to have some idea about the history of archaeology. We were the first to do this, in Paris. That requisite created the need for a book. You see traces of the class in the book. I started collecting quotations from former authors who created the intellectual framework for antiquarianism by asking how a Babylonian priest, an Egyptian pharaoh or a Roman emperor or historian looked at the material past. This may be the main difference between my book and Trigger's. Trigger was interested in the development of the idea and the influence of archaeology as a social science. *The discovery of the past* is dedicated to the contact, to the connection between antiquarianism and general culture. I felt that working with Trigger's book was problematic, and yet in doing so I discovered that I had to isolate and to define the concept of 'antiquarianism' as a different concept than 'archaeology'. If you look at Trigger's book, the two words are used in the same sense. I tried to go in a different direction, establishing the basis of modern archaeology in the first decade of the 19th century, when typology, technology and stratigraphy meet.

When I was taught archaeology, the first lecture was dedicated to Mortimer Wheeler and people would say that Mortimer Wheeler was the first to create a general frame for stratigraphy. Maybe Pitt-Rivers contributed a bit, but I discovered that a lot of Italian, British, even Mexican and Peruvian antiquarians were interested in stratigraphy. So if stratigraphy was not the key to modern archaeology, then we had to consider how stratigraphy was linked with typology. Typology was also practised from the Renaissance; you have a sort of typology even in Assyrio-Babylonian texts explaining the kind of inscription you have to use for this or that. And so these are the beginnings of typology. And the history of techniques, the way in which material culture is implemented, was also developed in the second part of the 18th century; that was a part of

the agenda of Comte Caylus, when he wrote his book against Montfauçon (see Schnapp and Dervis 2014). Boulanger, who was a pupil of Diderot's, when he produced his extraordinary *L'antiquité dévoilée*, also wrote a kind of attack against Montfauçon's *L'antiquité expliquée*. So we see the different cultural levels in which these antiquarians were used to developing their ideas.

FR: *Let me ask you about a different difference between your book and Trigger's, one about which we haven't talked yet: the visual richness of The discovery of the past – the fact that it is so beautifully illustrated – marks, for me, the most obvious and important difference between the two books. You approach the history of archaeology from different angles than Trigger does. I want you to talk about the importance of images in your book.*

AS: This is linked to the visual turn, if you wish. And this was also connected to my previous work on Greek iconography. Vernant, François Lissarrague, Françoise Frontisi-Ducroux and I were trying to use structuralism to interpret ancient Greek imagery, particularly vase painting. We had success in Italy, and we produced a small book, *La cité des images. Religion et société en Grèce antique*, in 1984 (Bérard *et al.* 1984). The book was well received and translated into English (Bérard *et al.* 1989), German, Spanish, Italian and Greek. There was immediate acceptance of the book because many people were interested in Greek vases. As we were planning that book, Claude Bérard, who was the head of the project, said, we will stage a small exhibition in Lausanne. And I said to Bérard, yes, but in Lausanne we will not get the visitors in whom we are interested, because we don't have a big museum. So we decided to produce a kind of illustrated collection of Greek vases related to the subjects of sacrifice, hunting and religion. And these images, sixty in all, with commentary, were presented in different exhibitions. Instead of creating a single exhibition in Lausanne or in Paris, we had twenty-five different exhibitions in every European country that was interested – we had one in Madrid, one in Edinburgh, one in Cambridge. The corpus was always the same, but in each place we presented different vases connected to the subject. Paris was the most exciting show because one of my students heard about the project and said, 'I work for the Metro in Paris, the RATP (Régie autonome des transports parisiens). If you are interested, we can present your exhibition at the Chatelet station.'

YH: *That's interesting – let's try and connect the two parts of our discussion. Briefly, could we say that this exhibition and the book, which is more like an extended catalogue of the exhibition, was more important in popularizing the work of that Vernant school than the major books that were produced by Vernant and Vidal-Naquet?*

AS: No, in fact, if you look at some of the books of Vernant's, the last one was translated into 35 languages, and was sold to 200 universities and colleges.

YH: *As a graduate student, my first kind of connection with that intellectual tradition was through this specific book.*

AS: For archaeologists, this book was seminal. In fact, in December 2018 we had a meeting in Geneva with Claude Bérard as a kind of celebration of that book. But when we were making the book, we were also connected with a critical movement in Germany; it was the launch of

Hephaistos, a journal based in Hamburg. Hamburg was one of the few German universities in which structuralism, Marxism, sociology and anthropology were applied to classical archaeology. This is a detour in our discussion, but this detour can explain the emphasis on illustrations in my *Discovery of the past*. In fact, I had two aims in mind. The first was to connect my reflections about the evolution of antiquarianism with illustrations. And the second was to include as many images as possible, since the publisher, which was a very small one, was interested in creating a very well-illustrated book. Normally when you go to a publishing house, publishers will say, 'oh, but you have too many images.' And yet this man said, 'No, no. They are not enough. Please come with more illustrations.' This partly explains my illustrated approach, and this was connected with the visual turn; in fact, as I was reflecting on illustration in antiquarianism, I discovered – abruptly so – that the major change in the history of antiquarianism was the use of illustration by antiquarians. And this is a particular feature of Western antiquarianism. Because you have Chinese antiquarians, you have Byzantine antiquarians, and Islamic antiquarians, Egyptian antiquarians. But nowhere – except in China with the print of the *Kao gu Tu*, the first catalogue of bronze vases in the 11th century A.D. – nowhere in the world was illustration used to present archaeological fact. So the moment in which for the first time, in the middle of the 15th century, antiquarians began to illustrate part of the discourse, the fact that you can present the past not only with words but with drawings, changed the landscape completely. This was a major development.

I can remember when I went to the Getty Research Institute for the first time, it was in 1996, I was there with Louis Marchesano, who was one of the curators of the Department of Prints and Drawings, and we had a discussion, and he said, 'you are using the word "antiquarianism" for remote societies like the Assyrian or the Egyptian. But the word was coined for the European approach to history'. So I tried to answer his criticism. And the answer was that Western antiquarianism was connected from its inception with illustration. And the Chinese were much more advanced in epigraphy in the 12th century with the Song dynasty, than any other European; even so, they never used illustrations of monuments or sites before the end of the 18th century. They were only interested in creating a catalogue of inscriptions using snapshot reproductions of the bronzes.

FR: *I have one final question: after The discovery of the past, another big contribution that you've made to the history of antiquarianism is the World antiquarianism volume published by the Getty (Schnapp et al. 2013). That volume had many different authors: people working on Mexican, Chinese, Mesopotamian, even prehistoric antiquarianism. But although it collected various contributions no one engaged in deliberate comparison; everybody studied their own tradition of antiquarianism, with occasional nods to Momigliano. I wanted to hear your thoughts on how to go from World antiquarianism forward; what will be the role of comparison? What can be compared? Because some of the problems that I myself have faced in engaging in this topic is the difficulty of comparison. As you know, I organized a conference in Bogotá at Universidad de Los Andes. The conference was entitled Otros pasados: ontologías*

alternativas en el estudio del pasado, and part of the problem there was very obviously one concerning the limits of comparison, specifically as it concerns different ways in which humans have engaged and continue to engage with the past. I wanted to hear your thoughts on the possibilities of comparative antiquarianism moving forward.

AS: My ideas of comparative antiquarianism are rooted in Vernant's approach developed at the Centre de recherche comparée. Vernant produced lavishly illustrated books such as the volume on sacrifice and the volume on the omen. But clearly the challenge that comparativists face is in how to organize their material, because the structure, the regime, of the production of knowledge changes from one culture to another, and from time to time for any culture (see Schnapp and Dervis 2015) I also think we should work on one of the obvious absences of *World antiquarianisms*, which is Africa. This is not connected with the fact that you have no antiquarians in Africa. It's connected with the fact that anthropologists and ethnologists working in Africa, with some exceptions, like Alfredo González-Ruibal, never produced a corpus of observations which can allow us to know more about the representation of the past in some of the cultures of Africa (González Ruibal 2017, and the introduction to Anderson and Rojas 2017).

We had some good work on Melanesia, particularly the work done by my colleague José Garanger, who excavated on the basis of a traditional Melanesian song. He went to a place in which a song encapsulated the moment of colonization of a small island, Vanuatu, he translated the whole song, and afterwards went with the elders to do the excavation. He established with C14 calibration that the remains were connected with the arrival of the population in the 15th century and that the song was true.

So, for five centuries, people in Vanuatu were able to maintain the quality of information of ritual which was performed five centuries before. Eric Conte at the University of Tahiti has developed this kind of approach in the last fifteen years. This kind of antiquarianism is produced by the Melanesians. After, we come with our archaeology, which is a different way of doing that, but I think one of the problems which is not resolved by the book is how to define, to give that good and solid and robust definition to, the word 'antiquarianism'. And there is still a lot of work to be done on this and on matters of epistemology.

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