Archaeological narratives in ethnicity studies

Archeologické příběhy ve studiu etnicity

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In order to study ethnicity through Archaeology, the first challenge is to fully understand what that form of identity is and how it works. In recent years scholars have started to overcome the 'introduction to ethnicity' syndrome —whereby recent anthropological developments are acknowledged and then disregarded when carrying out the analysis—, shedding light on new perspectives which enlighten our understanding of ethnic identity. In this paper, we not only revise these new approaches, but offer two novel case-studies: the Treveri from Late Iron Age Gaul and the Igaeditani from Roman Lusitania.

ethnicity – archaeological theory – landscapes – sanctuaries – Iron Age – Roman period

Pro studium etnicity prostřednictvím archeologie je třeba v první řadě plně chápat, co tato forma identity je a jak funguje. V posledních letech vědci začínají překonávat syndrom ‚úvodu do etnicity' – v jehož rámci se sice hlásí k nejnovějším antropologickým poznatkům, ale ve vlastní analýze je nezohledňují – a odhalují nové perspektivy, které informují naše chápání etnické identity. V tomto článku nejen revidujeme tyto nové přístupy, ale také předložíme dvě inovativní případové studie: Treveri z pozdní doby železné v Galii a Igaeditani z římské Lusitanie.

etnicita – teorie archeologie – krajina – svatyně – doba železná – doba římská

The 'introduction to ethnicity' syndrome

100 years after Gustaf Kossinna coined his *Siedlungsarchäologie* as a valid method for studying the prehistory of peoples, many of his theories are still being applied (*Kossinna 1911*; review in *Veit 1984*). It would seem that, after all the bad press concerning culture-historical approaches (notwithstanding *Bintliff 2008*, 156), this would no longer be the case. In truth, for decades most European archaeology has been in denial, not acknowledging the lack of methodological adaptation to the theoretical developments of the field of ethnic studies. In other words, processualism and Marxism affected little the way archaeological ethnicity was studied. This is especially true in Eastern and Central European research – which combines the German tradition (*Webster 2008*, 20) and the on-going culture-historical paradigm stemming from Soviet archaeology (*Bromlej – Kozlov 1989*; *Curta 2001*) – as well as that carried out in most of the West.

This continuity does not occur in a vacuum. Authors usually acknowledge the developments in the field of ethnic identity studies, having read and understood the conclusions drawn from the work of *Hodder* (*1982*), *Shennan* (*1989*), *Jones* (*1997*), etc. This is the 'introduction to ethnicity'-syndrome (*Reher 2011*), already denounced repeatedly though with other words. *Jones* (*1997*, 36) calls it 'received implicit framework' of the archaeological culture, 'a quasi-ideology free substitute' (*Veit 1989*, 42). This 'syndrome' can be well diagnosed: the introduction deals with the theoretical advances on ethnicity, whereas the rest

discreetly ignores them, no matter how stubborn the contradiction (*MacSweeney 2009*). As *Smith* (*2003*, 202) succinctly expressed it: 'In spite of an extensive anthropological and sociological literature exploring the inherent complexities of ethnicity, there is a tendency for archaeologists to gravitate, explicitly or implicitly, towards an essentialist perspective'.

Perhaps the firmest opposition to this attitude, pretty much resisting from within, is that of *Sebastian Brather* (*2004*). His work criticizes the assumed relationship between material ensembles and peoples of the past, thereby challenging the traditional ethnic interpretation of evidence for the Early Middle Ages in Central Europe.

Current approaches to ethnicity

Brather's rebellion against the 'introduction to ethnicity'-syndrome is understandable. In the 1980s *Hodder* (*1982*) and *Shennan* (*1989*) repeatedly called for a *rapprochement* between anthropology and archaeology regarding identity. In response, *Jones*' (*1997*) seminal study set the record straight as to what the situation was in that regard. Criticized for lacking adequate application, this book is still extremely valuable for setting a comprehensive record of the history of ethnicity studies and the advances in the anthropological and ethnoarchaeological fields, as well as how these can be applied in archaeology. Jones in this work breathes some life – and many changes – into Bentley's original idea of linking *Bourdieu*'s notion of *habitus* (*1977*) to the material record, thereby obtaining new insights into patterns of identity and tradition (*Bentley 1987*).

At the same time, Jonathan Hall published another important monograph (*Hall 1997*). Though less ambitious in his title than Jones, Hall nonetheless presents another ample revision of the study of ethnicity in different fields. His book does include a large applied study of how ethnic identity was manifested in the ancient Greek world. Hall becomes pretty much the purist, stating that the absence of written records leaves the material culture too orphaned of referents. Any attempt to make interpretations based solely on the archaeological record is misleading and epistemologically flawed (idea reiterated in *Hall 2002*). This stance serves as a preview of the highly sceptical position held by *Brather* (*2002*; *2004*), who goes much further by denying ethnic interpretations for the Early Middle Ages when there are written sources. The lack of certainty in interpreting ethnic signalling in material culture – roughly what *Wiessner* (*1983*) considered 'emblemic' style – is sound reasoning, but nonetheless there is much of throwing the baby out with the bathwater. In other words, harking back to the words of *Anfinset* (*2003*, 57) regarding ethnicity, should archaeology attempt to interpret non-observable processes? McGuire, knowing that the 'material symbols of ethnic identification' are hard to find, offered detecting the 'material correlates of ethnically specific behaviors' (paraphrasing his words in *McGuire 1982*, 163). The baby, indeed, does not have to follow the bathwater.

That is precisely why some authors still insist on studying ethnicity in archaeology (*fig. 1*; *Fernández-Götz 2008*; *Roymans 2004*; *Smith 2003*). Among the more enlightened approaches, firmly distanced from the 'introduction to ethnicity'-syndrome, we can highlight three:

1) First of all, many authors recognized the importance of notions of perceived common descent – often symbolized in origin myths – for ethnic identity. Detailed analysis of the

1) Traditional, culture-historical approaches

2) Renewed, but highly skeptical approaches:

archaeology is mute, and therefore unreadable

3) Renewed, more 'optimistic' approaches:

a) Reading narrative:

Interpreting the evolution of origin myths

b) Reading finds:

Interpreting micro-spatial distribution patterns

c) Reading scales:

Multi-scalar approaches to understanding ethnic processes

Fig. 1. Current approaches to ethnicity in Archaeology. Illustration: authors. Obr. 1. Současné přístupy k etnicitě v archeologii.

changing evolution of foundation myths for ancient peoples offers an insight into the narrative level: how ethnicity is tapped into for political reasons (*Cardete 2005a*; *2009*; *Derks – Roymans eds. 2009*). In this sense the complex web of identities drawn by the universe of the Greek *polis* has proven particularly fertile (*Daverio Rocchi 1999*; *Domínguez Monedero 2006*; *McInerney 1999*), with particular regards to the role of founding *oikistai* (*Malkin 1998*). This approach usually abstains from dealing with material culture (a landscape archaeology exception in *Cardete 2005b*). It is valuable, though, because it sheds light on processes taking place in intensely excavated contexts, and thus offers new interpretive possibilities.

2) The significance of the material record can only be adequately 'read' when it is interpreted in a contextually detailed analysis (*Jones 1997*; *Niculescu 2000*). In this way subtle patterns in domestic and ritual contexts – where ethnicity is most likely to be displayed (*Olsen – Kobyliński 1991*; *MacSweeney 2009*) – can be recorded. An extraordinary example of this approach is the work of *Stuart T. Smith* (*2003*), which deals with a colonial setting with a partial presence of written texts. In the frontier settlement of Askut, the selective maintenance of certain cultural traits in domestic contexts demonstrated the inherent complexity of identity: women, who serviced the household, chose to maintain Nubian ware for Nubian cooking in a household which displayed a purely Egyptian exterior (*Smith 2003*, 192). Thus, three forms of identity (gender, role and ethnicity) are meshed into a clearly visible archaeological pattern.

3) A third approach attempts to understand the ethnic processes by using a multi-scalar perspective. It combines the narrative level with a spatial contextual analysis, which is, in part, what *Smith* (*2003*) had already done in the Egyptian frontier. Its application in other imperialist contexts – on the fringe of literacy – has been quite successful, particularly in the case of the Batavians in the Lower Rhine region (*Roymans 2004*).

Siapkas (*2003*) uses De Certeau's theories to offer a new way to apprehend ethnicity in its fully volatile nature. He calls it 'heterological ethnicity', focusing on representation of the past, and how it can be reduced in order to allow for '[creating] space for insinuating diverse meanings [in narrating the past]' (*Siapkas 2003*, 31). This offers a new alternative

Fig. 2. Some theoretical and methodological considerations to keep in mind in any archaeological approach to past ethnic identities. Illustration: authors.
Obr. 2. Několik teoretických a metodologických úvah, které je třeba mít na zřeteli při archeologickém přístupu k minulým etnickým identitám.
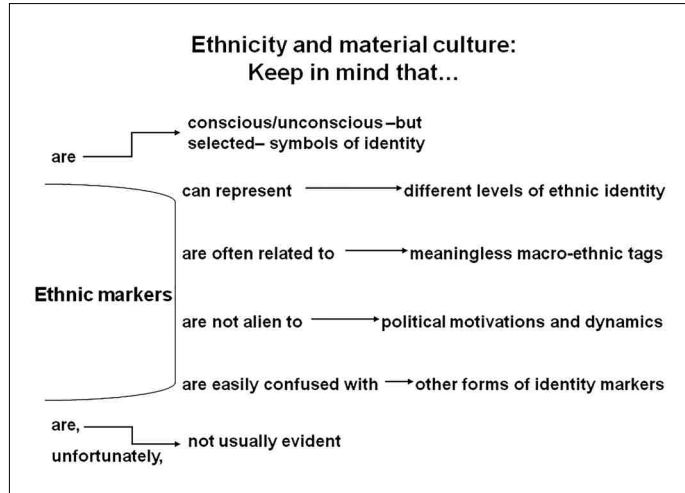
approach to knowledge of the past as something actively constructed by historians. Perhaps this is the best way to move forward in understanding ethnicity in its complexity of forms and content.

The complex relation between ethnicity and material culture

As we see it, linking historical realities, documented in texts, to actual social processes, that leave a material record, is the true challenge. This link, however, cannot be made directly as in culture-historical archaeology, but apprehending the vaporous nature of ethnic signalling. The aim of this paper is to offer comprehensive guidelines, based on a social sciences perspective of ethnicity and with the firm backing of the recent work described above, for avoiding flawed approaches which inevitably suffer from the 'introduction to ethnicity' syndrome. Before we attempt to read identity in the record, we must understand how it works in relation to it (*fig. 2*).

Ethnic identities are by definition subjective, dynamic and situational, which renders their relationships with material culture problematic and any archaeological approach complicated (*Jones 1997*; *Lucy 2005*; *Siapkas 2003*). Moreover, material culture is by definition multivocal: it is capable of symbolising multiple aspects of human relationships. But insofar as we are able to acknowledge these complexities there is no need to lapse into extreme scepticism. Like other social identities such as gender, age or class (*Díaz-Andreu et al. 2005*), ethnicity can be part of archaeological research agendas, though in many specific cases we must recognize the limits of our approaches. Material culture is an active constitutive dimension of social practice in that it both structures human agency and is, at the same time, a product of that agency (*Jones 1997*, 117–118). Thus it can become engaged in acknowledging and expressing ethnicity. In fact ethnic groups *may* communicate their identity through elements consciously or unconsciously selected among a vast cultural array. Therefore, we think that archaeology can make a positive contribution to a general approach

to ethnicity by providing insights into the broader contexts that form the backdrop against which ethnic dynamics can be understood (*Roymans 2004*). In this task, establishing whether material symbols were used consciously or unconsciously is not entirely fundamental, since in both cases they would nonetheless be active. As *Siân Jones* (*1997*, 119) has pointed out, any distinction between passive and active dimensions is undermined because all material culture is active in the processes of social production, reproduction and transformation.

The first step for an archaeology of ethnicity must be to reject any equation between archaeological culture and ethnic group (*Jones 1997*; *Shennan 1989*). As much anthropological work has shown (for example *Barth 1969*), it is in ethnicity's social and culturally manufactured nature to select only certain cultural aspects — the ethnic markers — as conscious or unconscious symbols of identity, as vessels of ethnic signalling. In addition, ethnoarchaeological studies have emphasized the active role of style in symbolizing identity and negotiating social relations, recognizing that the expression of ethnicity may be confined to a limited range of stylistic attributes which have become associated with an ethnic marker (*Hodder 1982*; *Sackett 1985*; *Sterner 1989*; *Wiessner 1983*).

We also need to understand ethnicity as only one of the many entangled expressions of individual and group identity which in turn constitute different possible levels of social aggregates. In this sense, it is important to keep in mind that ethnicity operates at different levels: there are several layers of identity and ethnic ascription that appear in a superimposed and co-integrated fashion. This way any given individual's ethnic affiliation may vary according to different circumstances, interlocutors, and situations and interplay with other identifying categories such as gender, status and religion (*Díaz-Andreu 1998*). Ethnic affiliation can therefore be expressed at different scales of social organisation (*Derks – Roymans 2009*, 1). This, however, does not mean that people can pick and choose their ethnic identity at any given moment. Their choice is situational and works within a range of different levels which are, to a great extent, constricted by social patterns, so we should recognise that 'ethnicity, while flexible, is not infinitely malleable' (*Lucy 2005*, 96).

A central problem of archaeological approaches to ethnicity is that, traditionally, researchers have mainly focused their interest on macro-concepts such as 'Celts', 'Germans' or 'Greeks'. These categories never were the scale at which ethnic identity was most likely played out in daily life (*Fernández-Götz 2008*, 133–134; *Roymans 2004*, 2–3). In pre-modern societies, smaller groups were much more likely to function as emic categories. This is due not only to the smaller scale at which societies worked due to a lower communication intensity, but also because these levels were closer to effective political entities. Therefore, it is necessary to move our attention away from the macro-categories and focus instead on smaller entities that were probably more meaningful to individuals, as we will show with our first case-study.

As seen before, the relation between political phenomena and ethnic identities can be very enlightening. Instrumentalist perspectives have underlined the important role of ethnicity when reinforcing and harnessing socio-political formations, to the point that *Derks* and *Roymans* (*2009*, 1) stated that 'it is politics that define ethnicity, not vice versa'. The Ancient World – from the Greek *poleis* (*Hansen 2006*) to the Late Iron Age Gallic polities (*Collis 2007*; *Fernández-Götz 2014*) – is filled with examples of political entities being imbued with strong group identity (*Burillo 2007*; *Derks – Roymans eds. 2009*; *Roymans 2004*). Some authors even claim that the construction of an ethnic group, or ethno-

genesis, requires a political power to shape, enhance and maintain an ethnic sentiment (*Cardete 2009*; *2010*).

Although we agree with *Moore* (*2011*) that the term 'tribe' is misleading and would be best avoided (see also *Parkinson 2002* for a recent approach to 'tribal' societies), the available textual, epigraphic, and even iconographic evidence clearly shows us that ethnic groups did exist in Antiquity and that they could be, at least in certain circumstances, a meaningful level of identification, and social action for individual persons. Surely, in many cases, other units of reference – such as the household, the farm, the village, or the valley – together with other forms of social identity must have had far greater significance in the everyday lives of most people than their belonging to a particular ethnic group. At least, this is what seems to be indicated by numerous historical, anthropological, and ethnoarchaeological studies, including work in northern Cameroon (*MacEachern 1994*) or on the Kalingas in the Philippines (*Stark 1999*). However, this does not preclude ethnic identities taking on a markedly protagonist role, especially at times of heightened tension and competition between different groups (cf. *Derks – Roymans eds. 2009*).

Because ethnic identity is only one of many possible existing identities, it cannot be studied separately from other fundamental categories of social construction (*Díaz-Andreu et al. 2005*). Depending greatly on variables such as gender, age or social status, ethnic manifestations and even ethnic sentiment itself must have been extremely heterogeneous within the same group. Therefore, ethnic markers are not necessarily the same for all members of society. In line with their different gender roles, we could for example expect men and women to have different ethnic markers (*Derks – Roymans 2009*). The concept of 'intersectionality' (*Davis 2008*), a theoretical tool for the holistic approach to the study of any identity, helps understand this reality without oversimplifying its natural complexity. To name only one case-study, Larick's ethno-archaeological research amongst the Loikop in Kenya (*Larick 1986*; *1991*) showed that certain elements of material culture could be ethnically significant. Owning a spear constituted being Loikop, but it was also used to signify age differentiation between age groups. Therefore, 'the expression of differentiation between age grades in terms of stylistic variation in spears, is greater than between ethnic groupings' (*Jones 1997*, 115).

The fact that there is not a single material culture trait that can be *per se* considered an unequivocal ethnicity marker does not render the process of choosing these elements completely random in every cultural context. On the contrary, the expression of ethnicity through material culture is linked to the structural dispositions of the *habitus* (*Jones 1997*, 120). Certainly, one of the main problems posed here is how to differentiate material elements with a possible ethnic significance from those expressing other forms of social identity. In our opinion the only answer lies in a diachronic analysis of past cultural contexts derived from a variety of sources and classes of data. In this sense, research on ethnicity in the Ancient World tends to be textually driven (*Derks – Roymans 2009*). As *Hall* (*2002*, 24) has noted: 'Ethnicity may be communicated archaeologically, but there can be no archaeology of ethnicity among societies who have left us no record'. Because of this, there is a growing consensus among archaeologists that the backing of some textual references is necessary (as long as they are duly criticized), at least as a starting point for discerning ethnicity from other forms of group identities not built on ethnic relations (*MacSweeney 2009*). Only a thorough analysis of each set of data can determine its degree of plausibility.

Pointers for the identification of ethnic markers

Any correct archaeological approach must begin by accepting that many of the potential markers (e.g. language, law and custom, delimited territory, music and dance, dress, ornament and colour – including body-painting, tattoos, scarification, etc. –) rarely leave an archaeological trace. Other possible markers are more susceptible to be object of archaeological analysis, for example food consumption and processing, style variations in pottery decoration, settlement patterns, prescribed deposition of funerary furnishings, types of dwelling, numismatics, iconography or inferences on religious life. In this sense it is important to study ethnicity in material culture through relations between artefacts and people, not merely in artefacts. Only by understanding the role of these elements in society can one assess whether they are signifying any sort of identity. This means paying due attention to how certain pottery is used, how a spear is deposited, how the domestic space is structured, etc. (*Fernández-Götz 2008*, 128–130). Finally we must consider information granted, in specific contexts, by 'missing data'. For example, in his study of the Turdetans of the Southwestern Iberian Peninsula, *García Fernández* (*2007*) has noted how it is the very absence of certain data that helps differentiate these communities from neighbouring peoples. The archaeological record offers a 'blank picture' of what certain peoples typically lack, do not express or express in different ways.

Given these conditions, the study of sanctuaries and other ritual places offers great possibilities. As *Derks* and *Roymans* (*2009*) have pointed out, the great sanctuaries of civic religion, as well as the meeting places of inter-group cult communities, offer one of the best possibilities for gaining access to ethnic constructs of the past at different scales of social organisation. These places would be the concrete anchoring points in the landscape where the polity's core values were transmitted to the wider community through recitals, dramatic performances and other collective rituals. In other words, these would be the places where the 'creation of tradition' could take place, a fundamental aspect of ethnogenetic processes (*Wenskus 1961*). Thus, the regional and supra-regional cult centres must have played a key role in the formation of groups with a shared ethnic identity (*Gerritsen – Roymans 2006*). This issue can be easily exemplified with our first case-study.

Case-study I: A landscape of sanctuaries in Late Iron Age Gaul

A good example of interrelationship between ethnicity, politics and religion is provided by the Treveri, one of the main Late Iron Age Gallic polities (end of the 2nd – 1st century BC) (*Fernández-Götz 2014*). The application of Thiessen polygons to the *oppida* located within the approximate territory of this ethnic group shows a nearly regular spatial distribution. This has been put in relation with a division in different sub-ethnic communities – usually referred to as *pagi*, due to a famous passage of Caesar (*BG* I, 12, 4–6), according to which the Helveti were constituted by four of these entities –, each one with an *oppidum* acting as a centre (*fig. 3*). In other words, in the case of the Treveri we seem to find an ethno-political entity subdivided into several smaller units, which in turn would be composed of extended family groups comprising various households. This organization is common to late proto-historic Gallic societies, constituting an excellent example of different layers of identities (*Fichtl 2012*).
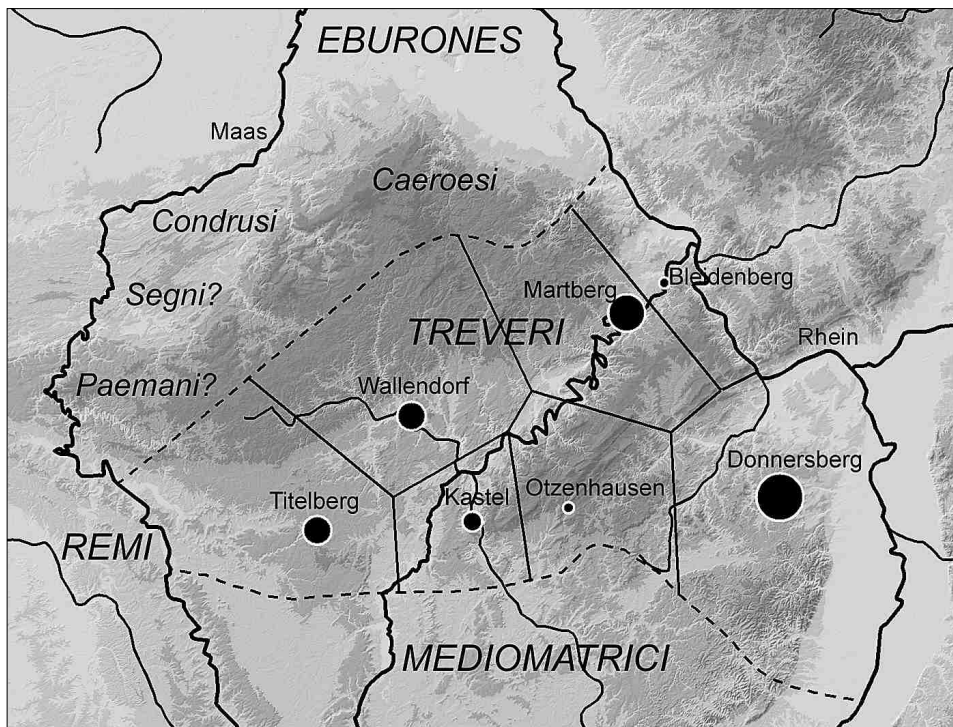
Fig. 3. Organisation of the Treveran territory based on the application of the Thiessen polygons method. After *Fernández-Götz 2014*.
Obr. 3. Teritoriální organizace Treveri na základě využití metody Thiessenových polygonů. Podle *Fernández-Götz 2014*.

It is important to notice that, apart from the recently discovered site of Bleidenberg, all *oppida* in the study area have yielded evidence of cult spaces within them, in five cases at the highest point of the fortified area. The most outstanding case is Titelberg (Luxembourg), where from a total area of 43 hectares, 10 were separated from the rest of the *oppidum* by a 4 m wide and 2.5 m deep ditch and an adobe wall (*fig. 4*; *Metzler – Méniel – Gaeng 2006*). During most of the first half of the 1st century BC, this clearly-demarcated space remained free for decades of any buildings, with the exception of a series of long parallel corridors which have been interpreted as voting installations similar to the *saepta* of some contemporary Italian cities. In contrast to this scarcity of architecture, a huge amount of bones bears witness to the celebration of large markets or fairs. In the Roman period, the sacred nature of this space would be monumentalized by a *fanum* that would last until its destruction in the 3rd century AD. The sheer size of the open space at Titelberg, far larger than any ordinary needs of the *oppidum* community would call for, suggests a public space used for large popular assemblies, which Caesar describes precisely for the Treveri (*BG* V, 56). These collective meetings, in which politics and religion were surely intertwined and that were probably accompanied by the celebration of fairs, were basic in the construction and maintenance of collective identities, in the sense pointed out by *Derks* and *Roymans* (*2009*).
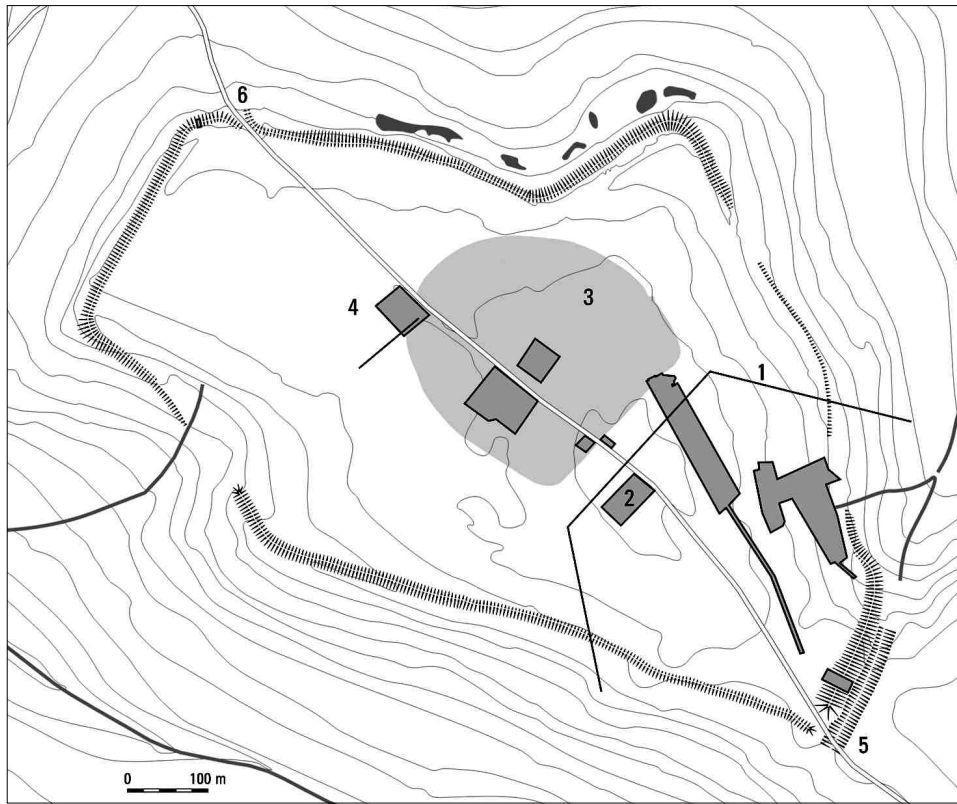
Fig. 4. Plan of the Titelberg *oppidum*: 1 cultic ditch that marks the boundary of the public space; 2 excavation of the monumental centre; 3 concentration of the La Tène habitat; 4 possible Roman military establishment; 5 east gate; 6 west gate. Re-drawn after *Metzler – Méniel – Gaeng 2006*.
Obr. 4. Plánek oppida Titelberg: 1 kultovní příkop, který vyznačuje hranici veřejného prostoru; 2 odkryv monumentálního centra; 3 koncentrace laténského habitatu; 4 možné vojenské zařízení doby římské; 5 východní brána; 6 západní brána. Překresleno podle *Metzler – Méniel – Gaeng 2006.*

Public spaces for assemblies and religious practices have also been recently recorded in other Treveran *oppida* such as Martberg, Wallendorf or Kastel-Staadt (*Fernández-Götz 2014*; *Krausse 2006*). To mention just one example, the sanctuary of Martberg comprises twelve phases that date from the beginning of the 1st century BC to the end of the 4th century AD. The profusion of finds is exceptional, with more than 7000 coins and hundreds of brooches (*Nickel – Thoma – Wigg-Wolf 2008*). As sites for collective rituals and festivities, the *oppida* of the Treveri served as a symbol for larger communities, and many of them also acted as minting centres (Titelberg, Martberg, Wallendorf, Donnersberg). In short, they were places where politics, ritual and the construction of collective identities went hand in hand.

As we have seen, in the case of the Treveri some elements are fruitful tools for analysing the collective construction of ethno-political processes. These include a large-scale spatial analysis, the internal organisation of the *oppida* and, to some extent, also numismatics. In fact, a number of coin emissions such as the gold staters and quarter staters of the so-called

'Armorican type' (Scheers 16–20), the silver coins 'with the angular nose' (Scheers 54) or the type 'seated mannikin' (Scheers 55) can be classified as 'ethnic markers' of the Treveri on the basis of their territorial distribution (see *Fernández-Götz 2014*, Chapter 8 for a more complete discussion).

Nevertheless, we should not expect these elements to work in the same way for other Gallic polities. To give an example, though the spatial distribution of *oppida* and sanctuaries also offers good results for the territory of groups like the Mediomatrici and Bellovaci, it does not for many other entities (*Fichtl 2012*). Moreover, studies carried out by *Barral* (*2003*) in Burgundy and the Franche-Comté show that there is no correspondence between the distribution areas of ceramic *facies* and the territory of the Aedui. This, however, is not an argument for denying the ethnic character of these or other Gallic polities, as some authors have erroneously interpreted. On the contrary, it provides us with a perfect example of the complex relationships between ethnic identities and material culture. In the case of the small group called Mandubii we do find a correspondence between the territory of the polity, a specific ceramic facies and certain coins (*Barral 2005*). Therefore, we can never assert that one element of material culture constitutes *per se* an 'ethnic marker', because its significance depends on the context. Even if numismatics – or ceramics, housing types, funerary rites, etc. – can be a useful indicator in a specific context, this does not mean that it has to be necessarily the same case in others.

Ethnicity in the Mediterranean world

In recent years some very interesting work has been carried out in the Mediterranean world, often emphasizing the significant contexts outlined above (cf. *Cifani – Stoddart eds. 2012*; *McInerney ed. 2014*). Food preparation and consumption has, as seen above, been a useful tool to disentangle the intertwined identities present at Askut (*Smith 2003*). This approach, though, has also offered interesting results in other colonial contexts such as Hacinebi (Turkey), where understanding the role of the different pots in the feeding process has shed light on two parallel traditions which are spatially segregated (*Pearce 1999*).

One of the most interesting conclusions of the Kush project has been the powerful difference there is between the public domestic and private domestic areas. This duality has proved fruitful in other studies, where on the one hand there is the insertion within a social narrative on behalf of the outward appearance, while tradition and negotiation take place in the back rooms. In Roman Africa we find a constant dialogue between the 'Punic renaissance' and 'Romanization', a dialogue which also takes place in the public-private duality, as has been testified in the form of mausoleums with outward declarations of pure Latin-ness, while exhibiting interiors stressing the neo-Punic nature of the deceased (*Mattingly 2007*). Even in life individuals in this area were known in some contexts by their Latin names, while in others through Punic features (*Fontana 2001*). The presence of a 'Phoenician renaissance' is in itself a very telling phenomenon – in light of the apparent consolidation of the Roman model on peoples of the Central Mediterranean – when viewed from a post-colonial perspective (Sardinia as a case-study in *van Dommelen 1998*).

Alterity is a key concept in understanding ethnicity. Identity can be stressed precisely in those places were the Others are nearby. Something similar to this must have happened

in the southern Picene region of Italy, where a great concentration of safin- and púpún- in-scriptions appear, apparently marking an ethnic border (*Dench 1995*). At Mesagne (Italy), alterity is taken to the extreme on behalf of an elite burial in an indigenous necropolis quite influenced by the material culture of the local Roman colony of *Brundisium*, and yet this individual had himself buried with purely indigenous elements (*Yntema 2009*), contrary to traditional historiography which links *romanitas* with the elite during the Italic expansion. This would work as a perfect example of how identity can be manipulated, and represented, in ritual contexts.

A very interesting research line has been the landscape approach to the role of cult-places in making and transforming ethnic identity, and marking ethnic borders. Several studies have focused on the boundary role played by religious sanctuaries, which are used by city-states as mediators with other city-states, while serving as their banners in the landscape. Studies in the Umbrian and Tuscan regions of Italy have shown how the role of these border *loca sacra* was used selectively and, perhaps, following supra-political ethnic trends (*Stoddart 1998*).

Cult places can also serve as beacons of identity for those within. In fascinating research carried out in ancient Arcadia (Greece), the creation of that political identity was marked with the establishment of new pan-Arcadian festivities surrounding Mount Lykaion (*Cardete 2005b*).

Not leaving city-states as a political structure, and in an approach clearly in tune with that used on the Batavian *civitas* (*Roymans 2004*), some work has been done on the origin, evolution and incorporation into the Roman world of the Celtiberian cities (*Burillo 2007*). Using the evolution of social structures, the iconography on coins, and a diachronic view of the varying relationship with Rome, Burillo draws a picture of changing power relations to illustrate the rise and fall of these political entities. The relation between *civitas*, cult practice and territory can be perfectly showcased in our second case-study from Lusitania.

Case-study II: Ethnic identity in the epigraphic *habitus* of Roman Lusitania

In the Portuguese Beira Interior, besides the river Ponsul, lies the village of Idanha-a-Velha (Castelo Branco). This site has for a long time been associated with a large Roman provincial town lying underneath. More than 167 inscriptions have been found, an amount which echoes that of the most significant ancient cities in Portugal. The archaeological remains which have been studied, particulary in recent times (*Carvalho 2009*; *de Sá 2007*), show a considerable degree of urbanism which is rare in this interior landscape. But the capital of the *civitas Igaeditanorum*, as it was known, was approximately 150 km away from the provincial capital of Lusitania: Emerita Augusta. It belies a provincial hierarchy of power whereby the *provincia* was above the *conventus* (in both cases Idanha was under the administrative control of Emerita). But under the *conventus* there was more than just directly the *civitates*. A large region, roughly equivalent to the size of the Beira Interior itself, appears to have its centre of roman-ness by the banks of the Ponsul. By this we mean not a city that could govern other cities – a figure we do not know for the Early Empire –, but a city that clearly did vertebrate the imperial system at the sub-conventual level.

This special weight does come to bear in the Later Roman period, when Idanha, whose name was by then turned to Egitania, was chosen to be the seat of a bishop. This reality
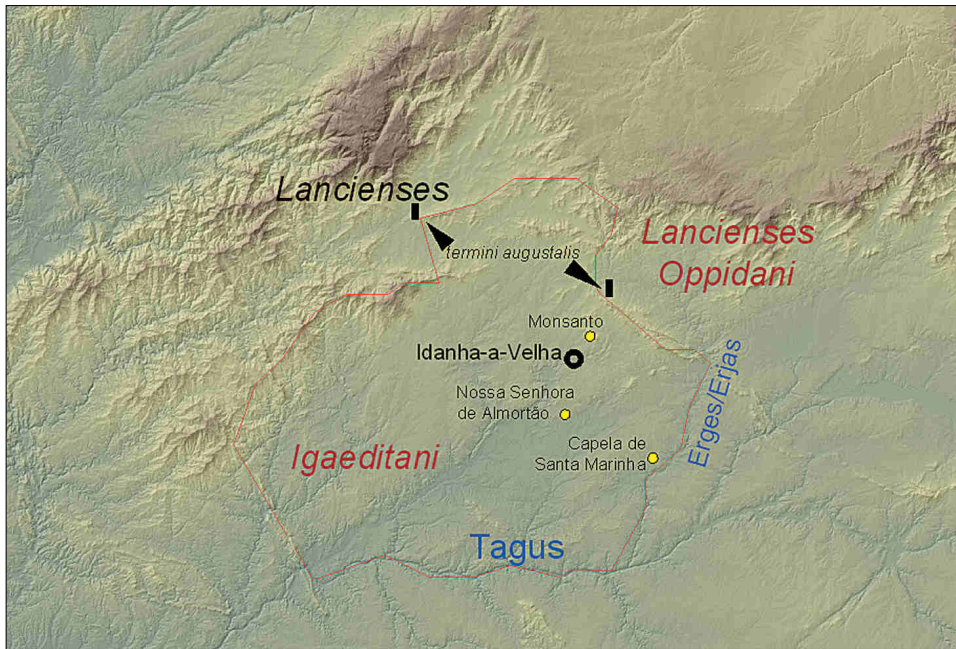
Fig. 5. Symbolic territory of the *civitas Igaeditanorum*.
Obr. 5. Symbolické teritorium *civitas Igaeditanorum*.

allows us to know that indeed there was a lively history in the city during Late Antiquity, despite the lack of much archaeological evidence – or interest for that matter.

The *civitas Igaeditanorum*, nonetheless, was an administrative unit created after the provincial reorganization carried out under Augustus. Apart from an extensive corpus of inscriptions, it has several characteristics which indicate the importance of the *civitas* in expressing identity, mainly centred on its symbolic landscape and the local peculiarities of the epigraphic habit.

The territory of the *civitas Igaeditanorum* (*fig. 5*) was strongly marked from a symbolic point of view. Overlooking the centre, looming above Idanha-a-Velha, is Monsanto, a lone peak fraught with religious significance as its current name testifies. A single *votum* found there was dedicated to the god *Mun(i)dus Igaed(itanus)* (HispaniaEpigraphica Online Database, HEpOL 20135). This religious dimension of the city is extended to its borders. In the Capela de Santa Marinha there are three inscriptions dedicated to the goddess *Erbina Iaedi/a* (HEpOL 23084 & 23085). This unassuming place is only a few kilometres away from the gorge formed by the Erjes/Erjas River which currently serves as a national border with Spain, a correlation which has not gone unnoticed (*García Fernández-Albalat 1993–1994*). To the south, a mountain which towers over the land, with command of the southern slopes which tumble down to the canyon formed by the Tagus River, is the seat of yet another homonymous cult, in the sanctuary of Nossa Senhora de Almortão. There, a dedication to the god *Igaedo* (HEpOL 20130) becomes a third example of a contemporary temple located in a place which in antiquity revered Igaeditania's namesake gods. The first example is a very

Fig. 6. Typical morphology of an Igaeditanian inscription (HEpOL 24881). Obr. 6. Charakteristická morfologie nápisu z Igaeditanorum (HEpOL 24881).

visible place in the centre of the *civitas*. The other two examples are very near or have a direct visual relation with the natural borders imposed by rivers on the East and South sides of the same *civitas*. To the north, two *termini* from the years 4–5 AD mark its northern border. These stones, which were sacred dedications to the god Terminus, are also, in a very different way, symbolically marking that border (*Castillo Pascual 1996*) along small mountain ranges which complete the spatial scenario.

Another aspect of Igaeditanian epigraphy which sets it apart is the epigraphic habit in general. The *origo* is often used to mark the citizenship of someone who dies or performs a religious vote outside his city. The use of this term within the *civitas*, therefore, becomes a sign of a seemingly unnecessary display of pride. In Igaeditania this occurs in 4 inscriptions, while in the neighbouring Caurium 11 stones bear witness to the origins of the protagonist. These numbers do not amount to much, but they do constitute important exceptions to other surrounding cities. Important epigraphic centres like Capara, Norba or Ammaia only have three examples in total. Another aspect of Igaeditanian epigraphy which is very different from the surrounding areas is the morphology of many of the inscriptions. There is a special taste for inscribed stone slabs or blocks framed in mouldings (*Ferreira 2004*), and made to be inserted in funerary monuments (*fig. 6*). This is a strong contrast to the self-standing tombstones or altars more common in neighbouring territories.

The combination of these two peculiarities of Igaeditanian epigraphy points towards the importance of *civitas* identity during the period (the 1st and 2nd centuries AD). These cities, which articulated the reproduction of social norms – the *habitus* – were very important on a symbolic, religious and ritual level.

The examples offered in this article, including the two case-studies, represent only a small selection and many others could have been equally named. Our aim was not to provide an extensive review, but to show that, despite the obvious difficulties inherent to these kind of studies, there is a way forward that overcomes both the 'introduction to ethnicity' syndrome and the extreme scepticism expressed by some authors. The Ancient world constitutes a privileged platform for that task.

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Archeologické příběhy ve studiu etnicity

Cílem tohoto článku je pochopit vztah mezi archeologií a studiem etnicity v jeho historiografickém kontextu. Úvod se zabývá jevem častým v současné archeologické literatuře – syndromem ‚úvodu do etnicity‘, v jehož rámci mnozí autoři uznávají složitý vztah mezi materiální kulturou, tak jak ji studuje archeologie, a etnickou identitou. Toto pochopení bývá nicméně zastřeno neustálým připisováním hodnot etnické identity mnoha prvkům materiální kultury. Tento syndrom vychází z extenzivní popularizace etnicity v archeologických studiích, která byla častá v 90. letech 20. století. Žádný archeolog sice nemohl nemít v povědomí antropologickou literaturu, to však nestačilo k proměně převládajícího paradigmatu, že „jednotlivé materiální kultury odpovídají národům".

Pouze pokud dojde k pochopení materiálního rozměru pramenů a jeho skutečného potenciálu k vyjádření etnicity, mohou být projevy identity doopravdy sledovány. Problémem je tedy schopnost čtení znaků, čtení pramenů tak, abychom porozuměli, jakým způsobem jsou buď výsledkem emblematického užívání, nebo kontextem kulturní interakce a jednání. Jinými slovy, materiální kultura nejsou jen předměty, ale také vztahy a symboly, bez jejichž pochopení nelze dosáhnout informace o významu těchto předmětů jako indikátorů etnicity. Ke komplexitě přispívá mnohovrstevná povaha etnicity a široká vyjadřovací schopnost indikátorů identity. Etnicita je v podstatě realita pochopitelná z hlediska vnímaného původu. Obdobně identita často vyjadřuje další společenské kategorie, jako gender, věk, třídu, ap. Všechny tyto podtexty musejí být v dostupných hmotných pramenech zjištěny a rozlišeny. Dosavadní výzkum prokázal, že etnické indikátory se stávají viditelnějšími, použitelnějšími, v kontextu interakce a/nebo konkurence. Nejsou pasivními výsledky etnické identity, nýbrž spíše stopami rituálního posilování společné identity. V případě etnických skupin se tato společná identita většinou projevuje prostorově, politickou konstrukcí dané identity jak v centru, tak na hranicích. V pravěku to znamenalo, že klíčová místa v krajině se stala posvátnou půdou k projevům etnické identity.

Článek uzavíráme studiemi dvěma oblastí pravěkého světa, kde lze toto chování sledovat. Tyto oblasti byly vybrány vzhledem k jejich srovnatelnosti co do teritoriálního členění a historického kontextu a rozmanitosti. První příklad je teritorium Treveri pozdní doby železné, popisovaný Césarem během jeho dobývání Galie. Různé úrovně a rozmanitost projevů, jimiž skupiny projevovaly svoji identitu, pokud vůbec, odhalují složitou souvislost mezi skupinou a hmotným projevem. Zdůrazněna je zejména klíčová role svatyň ve vytváření etnické a politické identity. Druhý příklad je poněkud pozdější a týká se římské *civitas Igaeditanorum* ve středním Portugalsku. Dynamika těchto městských celků se částečně podobá středoevropskému příkladu, ale jejich struktura se řídí odlišnou dynamikou a prioritami římského světa. Tyto administrativní celky, které badatele zřídka vybízejí k úvahám o etnicitě, překvapivě odhalují význam, který měla kolektivní identita pro jejich obyvatele nebo elity. Soudě podle epigrafických pramenů následujícího období vedl vznik těchto *civitates* za Augusta k rychlému vytvoření nejen teritoria, ale také identity. Tento nesoulad může směřovat proti intuici archeologů zabývajících se dobou železnou a dobou římskou, z nichž mnoho předpokládá důležitost kmene nebo oppida v obdobích před dobou římskou a vymizení jakékoliv sub-římské identity za dob impéria.

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