



Munich Personal RePEc Archive

Why archeological tourism does not work?: Evidence from two discoveries in Kosovo

Mulaj, Isa

Institute for Policy Research and Analyses (INEPRA)

10 May 2014

Online at <https://mpra.ub.uni-muenchen.de/59928/>

MPRA Paper No. 59928, posted 15 Nov 2014 05:14 UTC

**3rd Interdisciplinary Tourism Research Conference
3-8 June 2014, Istanbul, Turkey**

**Why archeological tourism does not work?: Evidence from
two discoveries in Kosovo**

Isa Mulaj

Institute for Economic Policy Research and Analyses (INEPRA)

Pristina, Kosovo

E-mail: isa.mulaj@gmail.com

Introduction

This paper brings an evidence about two unique archeological discoveries in Kosovo: i) Fingerprints in a rock from Pleistocene period; and ii) the Star of David, the Flower of Life, the Tree of Life, and “the Eye of the Masonry” found together engraved in a marble stone 1 meter long and 30 centimeters wide. The radiocarbon test of the latter puts the age of the engravings circa 2 500 BCE. It was found by the Author in 2013, located in the coordinate 42°48’41.50”N 20°34’16.00” E, 400 metres away from Fingerprints to the southwest, in Shushica village, municipality of Istog.¹

Archeological tourism is subject to a number of measures that should be undertaken to make it work. The sites where the two our discoveries are located are intensively polluted by the nearby residents. The municipal authorities of Istog have further neglected the sites after taking away the artifacts and no longer showing any interest.

¹ Shushica village is also the birthplace of Tahir Efendi (1826-1888), the father of Mehmet Akif Ersoy (1873-1936). Tahir Efendi was a tutor at Fatih Madrassah in Istanbul. His closest relatives among Albanians are from Mulaj family, including the Author of this paper.

Literature Review

Archeological discoveries are an ongoing process, trying to better understand the evolution of human civilization going back to very old times. In May 2013, the Happisburgh Footprints were discovered in a rocky terrain in eastern England. The results suggested the footprints to be circa 800 000 old from the Pleistocene period, making them the oldest evidence of human presence outside Africa (Ashton *et al*, 2014).

Tourism related to archeology or archeotourism aims to promote and preserve cultural heritage. Efforts in its development are faced with the challenge of protecting the artifacts from the theft, uncontrolled or poorly planned tourism associated facilities such as restaurants, residences and infrastructure (Douglas, 2012). The motive of destination to archeotourism is often to search *the lost knowledge from the past*, or the origin of a work that we know today, which was adopted from others and being presented as exclusively their own. A typical example is the Star of David. The Jewish Encyclopedia (1906) noted that its possible origin may be linked to the term "Magen Dawid" as the earliest source in a 12th century CE document, though the form of the symbol is not described. The blue hexagram currently in the Flag of Israel has been the official emblem of the Karamanid Dynasty (1250-1487), used by a Jewish community only from the 17th century, 1648 respectively. Human evolution, intermarriage and cultural development makes it hard to find how today Jews descended from ancient Israelites or Albanians from Illyrians, despite DNA tests confirming some genetic links. Sand (2009) asserts that modern Jews are not a nation, but more a result of cultural development and ideology. He further rejects the Old Testament which portrayed the creation of ancient Israelites together with the Earth.²

The Star of David became a symbol of Zionism in the first Zionist Congress held in Basel (Switzerland) in 1897. David himself left no idea or trace how *his Star* would look like much later attributed to him by others. Its massive use as the Yellow Badge for identification of the Jews was introduced by the Nazis during the Holocaust. The six pointed star, often referred to as the Seal of Solomon, is drawn inside a circle having six points between the six little triangles of the hexagram. However, the evidence on the Solomon's Seal of the time, is missing.

² Sand (2009: 64) refers to the Hellenized Jew, Flavius Josephus, who wrote probably the earliest known but reconstructed history about the Jews in the late first century CE: "The ancient historian [Flavius Josephus] was certain that the Pentateuch (the first five books of the Old Testament) was dictated by God to Moses, and he took for granted that the history of the Hebrews and Judeans ought to start with the creation of the world, since this was how the Scriptures present it."

The earliest presence of the Jews in the Balkans began in the 70s CE after, after a group of Jewish captives *en route* from the Roman Province of Judea to Rome escaped from a ship and settled on the shores of northwestern Epirus. They had built a synagogue there, the remains of which can be traced in the town of Saranda (Bajraktari, 2009). The mass Jewish immigration to the Balkans came from their exodus fleeing the Spanish inquisition from 1492. At the time, today's Kosovo was largely inhabited by the Slavs, with Shushica settlement having 38 households, all of them Slavs (Pulaha, 1974).³ From then to the present, there is no any record for the Jews in Shushica, except the migration through to Albania during the Holocaust where, Albanians were a unique case in sheltering the Jews (Sarner, 1997). The saving of the Jews by the Albanian Muslims was done under the code of honor called *besa* (Gershman, 2009). The Ottoman rule had not caused any change or imbalance of ethnic composition of the population in today's Kosovo borders until the Austrian-Turkish wars in the late 17th and beginning of 18th century. The Ottomans then favored those who embraced Islam. The overwhelming majority of them were Albanians coming from northern Albania, thus Kosovo was becoming predominantly Albanian (Horvat, 1998). To sum this section up, the artifacts discovered in Shushica are not the work of Jews, Albanians, Slavs, or Ottomans.

Methodology

The methodology uses ontological and epistemological approach. Ontology takes into account what actually exists, while epistemology is the study of knowledge. This combination implies that kind of knowledge for which there is a back up with real things. Legends as knowledge are useful only in cases when we are unable to decode forgone events that have left traces. A limited literature review was undertaken to see whether our findings are in line with the mainstream theory, or to what extent are diverging. The search for the original or the *first* and finding it, enables us to challenge respective standard theories, and provides a reason to drop the current naming of symbols in a massive use such as the Star of David.

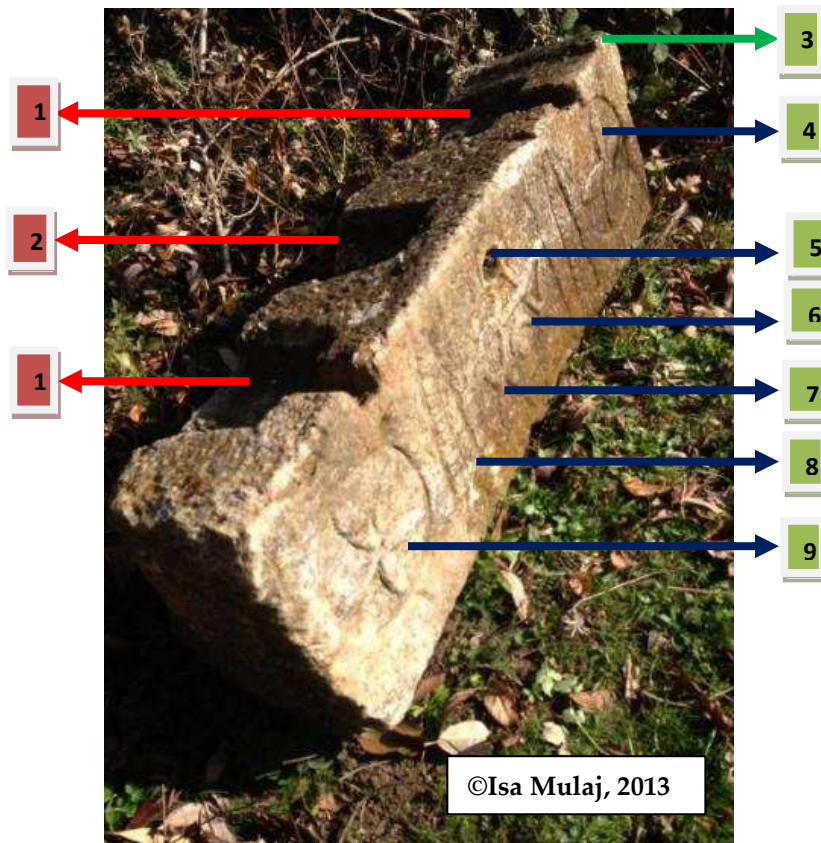
³ This is based on the Ottoman *Defter* (a kind of households' tax census) of 1485 by personal names of family heads and their fathers, e.g. Radovan the son of Stanisha, Jovan the son of Radivoje, Vladisava the widow, and so on (Pulaha, 1974: 202). All these are inherited among the Serbs as typical Serb names and no Albanian bears them, suggesting that nearly 100 years after the Battle of Kosovo, the overwhelming majority of the population was still Slavic.

Results

The results of this paper belong to two periods: i) Fingerprints from Pleistocene period; and ii) engravings in a marble stone from the Bronze Age. There is no testing technique by which the age of the Fingerprints called by the legend *the Fingers of Mujo-Halil*, can be determined, but they should be approximately old as the Happisburgh Footprints.



Picture 1: "The Fingers of Mujo Halil"



Picture 2: Engravings and symbols in a marble stone 2 500 BCE: 1) Mortise of extended order; 2) Mortise of the first order; 3) Capellevel; 4) the Flower of Life with four petals; 5) Unknown (possibly a whole for linkup with tenon lumber through mortise of the first order by a metallic bar); 6) "The Eye of the Masonry" inside the hexagon of Illyricum Sacrum (the Star of "David"); 7) Illyricum Sacrum; 8) The Tree of Life; 9) the Flower of Life with five petals.

The Flower of Life does not yet have an original source as where it has come from. The Albanian name for it is Lulja e Jetës or simply Luljeta, a widespread name for Albanian women in Kosovo. As a symbol, it was present almost in every cradle, especially from 1970s through 2000, the period which corresponded with the largest frequency of the name Luljeta among the women.

The Tree (or Fruit) of Life is an ancient symbol, referred to even in religious textbooks such the Bible and the Qur'an, e.g. reporting the story between Adam and Eve in the Garden of Eden as the Tree of Knowledge to make a distinction between the wrongs (sins) and the good.

Illyricum Sacrum engraved inside a square, different from the Seal of Solomon inside a circle, is the work of the Illyrians. *Sacrum* is a Latin term even in today's anatomy denoting a *large triangular bone* located in the human pelvis connecting body with the legs. A man was represented by a triangle in a pyramid shape, while the

woman by the triangle upside down to denote the opposite sex. When the two equilateral triangles are merged, they form the hexagram. A careful look at Picture 2 shows how the lines of one go above, then underneath the lines of the other triangle. We cannot go beyond other known or speculated interpretations for this symbol except the one that we have found and believe to have the meaning as it appears engraved.

The Eye of the Masonry or of Illuminati inside the hexagon of *Illyricum Sacrum*, is a mysterious symbol that has given rise to many conspiracy theories on alleged world rule. This symbol is currently in use with the Freemasonry and in the U.S. bill of 1 dollar. It probably was a mysterious symbol in *Illyricum Sacrum*, as *an all around (human) looking eye*.

Conclusion and Implications

Shushica provides two unique archeological discoveries, probably the oldest and most original of their kind so far discovered. The *Fingerprints* can be more important and advanced than the Hapisburgh Footprints. *The Flower of Life* has Illyrian origin and is inherited by the Albanians as a symbol and personal name for women as Luljeta. As the age of the *Tree* or *Fruit of Life* is much older than the stories about it written in the Bible and the Qur'an, we may conclude that the writings in the Holy Books are not the words of God but of humans attributed to God. The first use of the *Star of "David"* so far discovered is *Illyricum Sacrum*. The true name of the *Eye of the Masonry* has yet to be discovered.

Archeotourism first of all requires the rising significance of knowledge for discoveries. Such knowledge in Shushica, and generally in Kosovo, is deficient, therefore, the chances of promoting tourism about this cause are relatively small. In addition, archeotourism falls out of favor as the inhabitants nearby continue to pollute the environment, and the institutions just take away the priceless artifacts and forget the site.

References

- Ashton, N., Lewis, S.G., De Groote, I., Duffy, S.M., Bates, M., Bates, R., Hoare, P., Lewis, M., Parfit, S.S., Peglar, S., Williams, C., & Stringer, C. (2014). Hominin Footprints from Early Pleistocene Deposits at Happisburgh, UK. *PLoS ONE* 9(2): e88329. doi:10.1371/journal.pone.0088329.
- Bajraktari, H. (2009). *Marrëdhëniet shqiptaro-hebraike (Albanian-Hebrew Relations)*. Prishtinë: Instituti Shqiptar i Studimeve Politike.
- Comer, D.C. (2012). *Tourism and Archaeological Heritage Management at Petra: Driver to Development or Destruction?* New York: Springer.
- Gershman, H. N. (2009). *Besa: Muslims who Saved Jews*. New York: Syracuse University Press.
- Horvat, B. (1998), *Kosovsko Pitanje (The Kosovo Question)*. Zagreb: Globus.
- Pulaha, S. (1974). *Defteri i regjistrimit të sanxhakut të Shkodrës i vitit 1485 (Defters of the Census in the Shkodra Sanjak of 1485)*. Tiranë: Akademia e Shkencave e R.P. të Shqipërisë, Instituti i Historisë.
- Sand, S. (2009). *The Invention of the Jewish People*. New York: Verso, translated from Hebrew by Yael Lotan.
- Sarner, H. (1999). *Rescue in Albania: one hundred percent of Jews in Albania rescued from Holocaust*. Cathedral City, CA: Brunswick Press.
- The Jewish Encyclopedia (1906). Magen Dawid, Retrieved from March 11, 2014 <http://www.jewishencyclopedia.com/articles/10257-magen-dawid>.