

Premio Internazionale Carlo Scarpa per il Giardino

***Güllüdere and Kızılçukur:
the Rose Valley and the Red Valley
in Cappadocia***

public conference
Friday 7th May 2021

abstracts, in order of programme

Maria Andaloro

Güllüdere and Kızılçukur. Amid forests of cones, inhabited rocks, and painted churches

This is a two-part talk.

The guiding thread of the first part will take us through the valleys of Güllüdere and Kızılçukur 'amid forests of cones, inhabited rocks, and painted churches'. As we wander, we will take our bearings from the light of the integrated vision resulting from the unitary, complementary whole formed by the two faces of Cappadocia's wonderful rupestrian landscape, the stunning, metamorphic exterior, and the mysterious interior that reveals itself whenever we cross the threshold of the many entrances opening out of the rock walls to enter one of the countless spaces carved out of the rock – churches, monasteries, lay dwellings, rural villages, funerary areas – designated as a home or workspace, as a place of prayer or of death.

In the second part, the focus moves to the gaze of others; the guiding thread leads us to the 'critical fortunes' of Cappadocia, that intermittent series of visions of this place during a time-frame spanning the 6th to the 20th century. I will limit myself to dwelling on three moments in this very long series.

For the Cappadocians living in the Güllüdere and Kizilçukur valleys at the time when the antique churches 'visited' in the first part of my essay were being carved out of the rock and painted, that landscape was essentially creation, the beautiful work of God the Creator, in harmony with the vision of the Cappadocian fathers, in particular, of Basil the Great, bishop of Caesarea.

The English explorer W.E. Ainsworth who visited Cappadocia in the first half of the 19th century had a rather different vision when he rested his erudite gaze upon this forest of cones, seeing them like the ruins of an ancient city.

In June 1969, as he wrote the verses of *The e mele*, Pier Paolo Pasolini evoked the 'path of pink dust' in Güllüdere, where he would film some of the most unforgettable scenes of *Medea*, interpreting the landscape through the eyes of a painter and art historian, as a work of art, describing and representing it in terms of form and colour.

Gino Mirocle Crisci

The geological nature of the Cappadocian landscape

Spectacular natural landscapes created by erosion phenomena can be found all over the world: from Bruce Canyon to Monument Valley, to the earth pyramids of South Tyrol. Similarly, remains of human settlements in natural caves and rock-cut structures can also be found in every country, even in Italy and especially in southern Italy, with the famous site of Matera. There is only one place in the world where a stunning landscape produced by natural erosion processes is linked to its use as habitations by humans, and that is Cappadocia.

Turkey is characterized by an extremely complex geological situation, revealed by the occurrence of frequent, highly destructive earthquakes, and over the past ten million years, Cappadocia has experienced at least eight occurrences of explosive paroxysmal volcanic eruption, leading to the formation of deep sediments. During the period of stasis, fluvial-



lacustrine basins were created in the area, which rapidly filled with erosional deposits from the surrounding areas. In time, the alternation of volcanic deposits and lacustrine sediments generated a layer of sediments that is 2 kilometres deep in some points.

The volcanic products found in Cappadocia derive from the huge pyroclastic flows of volcanic ash and magmatic gas. After losing its gas, the pyroclastic cloud deposits pieces of fragmental material (tephra), which undergoes a process of compression, generating the volcanoclastic deposits that we see today. The material formed in this manner, which is also known as 'volcanic tuff' is characterized by good mechanical resistance and low resistance to erosion. Given the particular nature of pyroclastic products, the damp, rainy climate of the last few millennia generated erosional processes leading to the current morphology. The different forms found here are the result of the differing degrees of erodibility of the tuff.

Murat Ertuğrul Gülyaz

Cappadocia's rock heritage and its image in local and international culture

With its fascinating geological structures, as well as its settlements carved into the rocks, its churches, dove-cotes and its still enigmatic underground cities, Cappadocia is one of those rare places on earth that are both natural and cultural centres.

The first inhabitants of Cappadocia were hunters and gatherers. They fed on wild plants and game they hunted using tools made of obsidian and flintstone, which are found in great quantities in the region. In the face of harsh weather conditions and the many dangers of nature, they would seek sanctuary in the nearest enclosed space, eventually abandoning their nomadic lifestyle and settling in shelters, such as the caves so abundant in this area.

The tuff that covers the Cappadocia region is carved very easily and this was the prime reason why people chose to settle here. Settlements were constructed mostly on the steep slopes of the valleys or within the fairy chimney and in accordance with people's lifestyles. The carving technique remained unchanged throughout centuries, and due to the dry climate, traces of carvings on walls and ceilings have been preserved to this day.

These spaces carved into the rocks are ideal for human habitation, as they are warm during the winter and cool in the summer, which is why people continued living in them for many centuries. The rocks also provided an ideal place of worship both for monks who chose to retreat here and for colonies leading monastic lives. Consequently, different architectural types of rock churches and monasteries developed in this area.

Cappadocia is a UNESCO World Heritage Site, on the basis of natural and cultural criteria, and was listed in 1985 as 'Göreme National Park and Cappadocia'. Hot air balloon tours, which have become the symbol of Cappadocia today, are one of the preferred activities for tourists. It provides the opportunity to see both the extraordinary panoramic views and the places that cannot be reached on foot, becoming an alternative to sea, sand and sun tourism. Cappadocia, which will become even more attractive with its infrastructure and superstructure investments, will continue to be one of the centres of culture and belief tourism due to its rich history and cultural values.

Aslı Özbay

Cappadocian civil architecture: safeguarding and inhabiting ancient rock-cut settlements

Cappadocia has been a world attraction since the 1980s, when it was first included in the UNESCO's World Heritage List. In addition to its extraordinary geography, Cappadocia, which covers an area almost the size of the Netherlands, is a land where human beings have lived a settled life based on agriculture for at least 3,000 years. Since the Hittites in the second millennium BC, the civilian population in this large multicultural area developed a life culture by carving underground cave spaces. The modest civil architecture of Cappadocia, which finds its most popular and colourful examples in places of worship after the 4th century of the Eastern Roman-Byzantine period, also contains traces of refined civil cultures. Apart from religious places, the details of civil architecture representing a multi-layered and multicultural category shed light on the living spaces of communities belonging to many sects of two religions with fundamental differences: Islam and Christianity. However, when examined thoroughly, architectural projections actually provide evidence that many differences of belief disappeared in everyday life.



Today, agriculture in the region is no longer an essential economic force. People who want to live in Cappadocian caves are no longer local villagers but tourists. The tourism sector is full of entrepreneurs, competing with each other to offer 'fantastic opportunities' for guests who want to experience this historical background by living in cave rooms for a few days. This is where architecture and the safeguarding of our heritage are challenged: is it possible to meet the expectations of tourism without sacrificing Cappadocia to the 'fake paradise' scenarios promised by tourism professionals, without distracting from the historical information, *genius loci* of space and spatial characteristics of the cave architecture that has been shaped through humble living cultures for centuries?

Fabio Salomoni

Cappadocia in the Anatolian plateau: spaces and times in movement

Cappadocia is part of a wider geographical area, Anatolia, a symbolic space of great significance for modern Turkish history. The Turkish nation-state, born out of the ashes of the Ottoman Empire in 1923, created a discourse identifying Anatolia as the cradle of the 'authentic' values of Turkish history and culture, in contrast with the Ottoman history and past that the Republic wished to leave far behind.

However, this space, its history and its landscape, bears Byzantine, Greek, and Armenian traces at odds with the official discourse and which have therefore been marginalized for many years. Cappadocia is a particularly significant example of this alterity. On this occasion, I intend to re-examine the approaches used to build this discourse on Anatolian space/time, on Cappadocia's otherness, and the strategies used to exclude it from the official discourse. I will then illustrate the paradoxical consequences resulting from the 'discovery' of the region by an international audience, from the 1960s onwards, and its subsequent transformation into a tourist destination. This process encouraged both central government and local authorities to rediscover and reintegrate Byzantine medieval Cappadocia within the national space/time construct. However, this integration continued to exclude 19th-century Greek and Armenian heritage, whose temporal closeness was more of a potential threat for the official discourse. Paradoxically, the integration of the region's Byzantine past has led to the marginalization of its Turkish-Ottoman past and heritage. From the early 2000s onwards, both global and local processes contributed to redesigning practices and representations of Cappadocia and its relations with Anatolian and national space/time, not without paradoxes and contradictions.

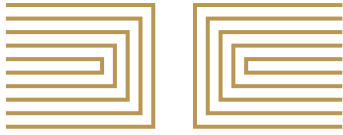
Monique Mosser

The World Heritage Sites and the museumification in the era of mass tourism, in times of pandemic

In recent months, these images have travelled around the world: the waters of the Venetian canals have become calm and clear again; turtles are laying their eggs on the idyllic beaches of Thailand; the Champs-Élysées seem more spacious than usual... Between the numerous effects of the Covid-19 pandemic, those on the tourism industry are particularly visible and perceptible in terms of their impact.

Defined by the World Tourism Organization (WTO) as "the impact of tourism on a destination, or parts thereof, that excessively influences perceived quality of life of citizens and/or quality of visitors' experiences in a negative way", overtourism embraces all of the negative impacts attributed to this sector. In recent years, it has become the main worry of the actors belonging to this leading world industry. The trend is revealed in a significant statistic: according to the WTO, in 2018, there were 1.4 billion international tourists worldwide, making this the ninth consecutive year of growth for the sector.

Many tourist sites associated with the World Heritage Sites, like the Göreme National Park and the Rock Sites of Cappadocia, are victims of their own success, attracting more visitors than their infrastructures can handle. The consequences are not just human – in particular, with regard to the living conditions of the locals – but also, and above all, environmental: CO₂ emissions and greenhouse gases, pollution of natural spaces, high energy and water consumption, and so on. Numerous strategies have been developed and put in place to combat the problem of overtourism: from educating tourists to one-off closures of



sites, from increasing prices and taxes to the distribution of tourists into off-peak periods. However, the impact of such actions remains limited because they have been implemented from within the sector itself, that is, by the very actors who are heavily involved in tourism.

Due to its unpredictable character and its unprecedented power, the Covid-19 pandemic effectively forced tourism actors to reinvent themselves. An interesting example comes from Thailand where the authorities have been able to observe the extent to which radical measures can contribute to the fight against overtourism in actual conditions. The closure of parks during the pandemic has allowed the natural habitat to regenerate, bringing back wildlife, like whales and turtles, to certain sites. Based on this experience, the authorities have decided that from 2021 onwards, they will close all parks for two to four months a year, so as to improve the conservation of these areas. The unforeseen circumstances of the Covid-19 crisis have given tourism actors the opportunity to adopt exceptional strategies that they would never have implemented in normal times. Despite the disastrous consequences for the tourism sector in both the short and medium term, the Covid-19 crisis may well have positive consequences in the long term.