

CREATION, DIFFUSION, PERCEPTION AND REEVALUATION OF ARCHAEOLOGICAL KNOWLEDGE: THE CASE OF THE GILLIÉRON ARTISTS

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Abstract

Here is presented the case of three artists of major importance for the early phases of Archaeological research in Greece; they contributed fundamentally to the diffusion and propagation of scientific knowledge between the 1870ies and 1939: Émile Gilliéron *père* (1850-1924) and his homonymous son (1885-1939) collaborated with major projects of their time. For Crete, precisely, the majority of famous iconic images still represented in books, art or souvenirs, was once processed by their artistic skills. The artists produced work in multiple styles, materials, techniques and artistic periods, from Neolithic to Byzantine, or Folklore to modern heritage. They literally translated artistic forms of Greek culture into images now recognized by a wide international public and used in science, museum exhibits, education and the free market (souvenirs). The grandson Alfred G. took on the artistic tradition to the third generation, by propagating the repertoire of his peers via the souvenirs market. Many of their images acquired an autonomous "life", independent from the evolution of scientific knowledge. In several cases this established knowledge has now to be controlled, reviewed, corrected or updated.

The acquisition of their archive and workshop by the French School at Athens (EFA) provided research with the opportunity to launch an interdisciplinary project, dealing with a multitude of original data: artwork, equipment, photography and textual archival material. This project will need state of the art digital tools in order to enhance the diverse data; scientific approach will be provided by the collaboration of specialists of various fields within the Archaeological Science, History of Archaeology, Conservation, Cultural Tourism, Museology etc. The participation at the CIDOC Conference occurs at an early stage of the project and may positively influence the process to be followed.

Keywords: Gilliéron, Archive, Replicas

1 Introduction

The artists Émile Gilliéron *père* and his homonymous son Gilliéron *Fils* are familiar to the community of archaeologists in Greece. From 1876/7 -the year when the young Émile settled in Athens- to 1939, when his son died in Athens at age 54, the artists dwelt at the very center of archaeological knowledge production for over sixty years; during the times of systematization of archaeological procedures, the period of intense impact of the Archaeological Society in Athens, contemporary to major discoveries and excavations of central sites, as to the establishment of the major foreign archaeological schools in Athens, with which they collaborated without exception (French, German, American, British, Italian, Austrian, Swedish) (Τουντασάκη and Μαρονίτη 2015).

Even though the outline of their life-stories is well known (Stürmer 2004; Lapatin 2002; Marinatos 2015), detailed biographies and the full list of their collaborations are still due (Mitsopoulou and Polychronopoulou, n.d.). Albeit the important number of studies devoted to them and their *œuvre*, a major new opportunity for knowledge enhancement has been offered recently: the descendant of 4th generation, Émile Gaston Gilliéron, donated the archive and material equipment of his ancestors to the French School at Athens (2015-2018). Consequently, a source for entirely fresh and new knowledge has been made available for treatment; it may concern and influence a long series of issues concerning the History of Greek Archaeology.

2 Diffusion of Knowledge *via* replicas and souvenirs

To which extent the artworks related to the Gilliérons still maintain a protagonistic role in museums as in the conscience of the public, is shown by the recent decisions of the Ministry of Culture (Archaeological Resources Fund) concerning the thematic and stylistic renewal of official souvenir products.

Souvenirs are a major parameter in the diffusion of knowledge, and the Gilliérons were pioneers in selecting archaeological objects that could catch the eye of the modern consumer, and in producing original replicas from them. Their repertoire of official copies has permanently influenced the branch of souvenirs. Initially produced for the scientific community and foreign museums or university collections, the objects were also bought by individual collectors (Lapatin 2017, 83). Replicas of the main finds from the Mycenaean and the Minoan world became famous and acquired a high level of recognizability. Which visitor -from however far- would not recognize the icon of the Phaistos Disc, the (invented) Prince of the Lilies (Farnoux 1993, 128–31) or the mask of Agamemnon? Even if he may ignore the detailed biographies of individual objects, these images are consumed as something “specifically Greek”, which it is worthwhile to bring home. This repertoire was established during the early 1900s, and is linked to the Gilliérons and their environment.

More than a century has gone by, archaeological discoveries in Greece have added hundreds of thousands new unearthed finds and beautiful objects, some of which may be equally well adapted to a use as museum replica and souvenir. Material is far more abundant than in Gilliérons times, and so are technologies of replication and image design. Numerous new themes and objects have been replicated since (“Museum Shops” n.d.). But the results of a recent design contest launched in 2016 by the Archaeological Resources Fund are astounding: the century-old themes and objects remain the familiar best sellers and eye catchers. An important part of the proposals signed by young designers handling modern techniques and digital tools, are once again based on traditional gilliéronesque motifs: *La Parisienne*, the goddess of the serpents, the Knossos bull and Minoan decorated architecture (Lifo Team 2016) (**Fig. 1.a-d**).

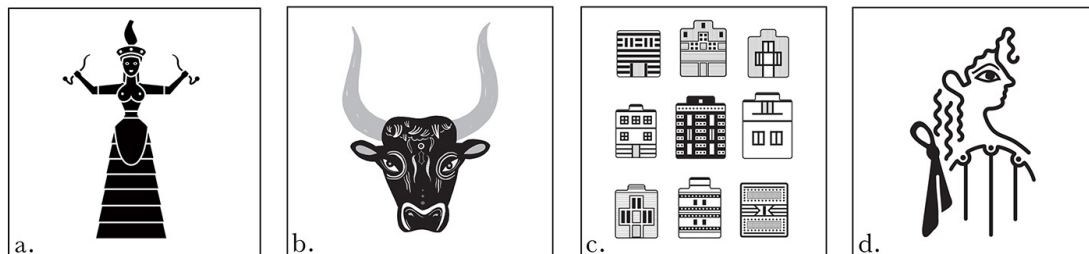


Fig. 1.a-d. a. Snake Goddess; b. Bull Vase; c. Faience facades; d. *La Parisienne* (after Lifo 2016)

3 Knowledge acquisition (not) displayed in main archaeological museums

The first two Gilliérons are linked to most major sites, monuments and museums in Greece, before WWII. Taking as an example the National Archaeological Museum of Athens, there may be not a single room (except the more recent section on Akrotiri, Thera, or private collections), where one of them would not have a related artwork to show. Father or son Gilliéron have touched or drawn famous artifacts from the Neolithic, Cycladic and Mycenaean rooms of the ground floor; equally they have designed and/or restored archaic statues and polychrome architectural pediments, bronze statues and statuettes, Hellenistic sculpture, funeral stelai, votive reliefs, votives and small finds, as mosaic floors, jewelry or coins.

In the rooms of the upper floor, both Gilliérons are linked to vases (from geometric, proto-attic, archaic, classical to Hellenistic), as draftsmen and/or restorers. Speaking only of published drawings, we may point out two artifacts of high importance for History of ancient Art: the painted and inscribed metopes of Thermon (*G. père*) (Palagia 2017, 3, fig. 1; Plantzos 2018, 81-83, fig. 71-75), as the wooden votive tablets of Pitsa (*G. fils*), that show such astoundingly close links to their contemporary vase-painting techniques (Brecoulaki et al. 2017, 18; Plantzos 2018, 86-89, fig. 79-83). Concerning classical vases, Gilliéron can be related to the eponymous epinetron of the Eretria painter (Hartwig 1897, 129, pl. 9-10). From the gold jewels (room 62) he had produced -amidst others- drawings of the peculiar finds from the thessalian “Palaikastro Treasure” (Arvanitopoulos 1912, 85, pl. 2-3); the gilded silver *alabastron* -unique from many points of view- was drawn and interpreted by Gilliéron in close collaboration with the excavator. Since recently it is attracting renewed regards in the thematic exposition on *Beauty* (Lagogianni 2018, 86, nr. 34). Visitors may be confronted with a “beautiful object”, but they get no further insight on its interpretation, or the drawing - the sole medium that renders the rare difficult scene legible (**Fig. 2.a-b**).

Père's close collaboration with excavators, as his role during interpretative efforts of the finds, seem long forgotten; at least, they are not announced to the uninformed visitor, who gets no insight into earlier phases of archaeological scholarship, discoveries and the complexity of related hesitations during the phase of the

elaboration of knowledge. The list of *Gilliéronesque* artworks in the National Museum may prove much longer, and so are their encounters and influence upon the scholars who produced the publications. The role of the Gilliérons went far beyond mere drafting and restoring, they interacted with excavators and scholars.



Fig. 2.a-b. Silver alabastron, Palaikastro Treasure, Karditsa (NMA): a. Floral zone, frieze with dancing putti; b. Main zone: seated woman with child, maenad and Satyr (?) in forestry landscape (Arvanitopoulos 1912, pl. 3)

Albeit their fundamental relation with the original restoration, interpretation and “museological” preparation of objects of major importance for public display, the visitor of the museum is hardly ever confronted with information regarding the Gilliérons, who contributed so acutely to the earliest phases of knowledge establishment (in both positive and questionable ways). Room 66 of the 1st floor displays a gallery of skilled draftsmen in vase painting; only Gilliéron *Fils* is mentioned in the legend of vitrine IV.1 The museum is rich in their works, but information about the artists is scarce, one might say in a peculiar kind of oblivion. In a brief account of the museum’s history Semni Karouzou referred to important collaborators (painters or restorers), but none of the Gilliérons (Καρούζου 1981, 15–17). In the recently opened room 60 of the Vlastos-Serpieri Collection is displayed the original seal of the Association of the Friends of the Archaeological Museum, founded in 1933 by the numismatist, collector and donor Michael P. Vlastos (Γκαδόλου and Καββαδίας 2012). Aside the official funding letter, the seal is shown in its original leather cover, signed by É. Gilliéron *fils* on 5/3/1934. Curators have exposed an eponymous work by Gilliéron *fils* (vitrine 9, no. 2) (**Fig. 3**), alluding to his fundamental role behind the scenes, amidst the community of archaeologists and their supporting public (friends, donors, collectors etc.). But this hint does provide no further link for the visitor towards information related to the central role of both artists during the inaugural decades of the Museums history.

Generally, the long process of knowledge acquisition, preceded by long silent years of research, hesitation and ambiguities, was not addressed as a topic in traditional archaeological museums in Greece; it remained inside information unshared with the visitors, who were -and still are in most cases- confronted with established, clear, seemingly undisputable information, allowing no doubt or hesitation (not speaking of dialogue, feedback or discussion). The well-routed hierarchy of “certainties” is still prevalent in the archaeological milieu, despite modern museological influence, crowd-sourcing approaches adopted in other environments and new equipment: state of the art vitrines, materials, illumination etc.).

But what happens with the uncertainties of the scholar, the unuttered hesitations of the specialist, the limits or lack of available knowledge in order to deal adequately with still open questions and interpretative needs? “*I do not know*” is an answer that seemed banned from academic rhetoric and museum display, and nothing to be proud of. It is not long since the admission of non-comprehension ceased to be considered as weakness, whenever data for the full picture is lacking. But tendencies change: a recent exposition in Herne, Germany (“Irrtümer & Fälschungen der Archäologie. Ausstellung 23.03-09.09.2018”), offers a place to the notions of mistakes, misinterpretations and forgeries.

4 Knowledge acquisition et reevaluation

Knowledge related to the Gilliéron phenomenon may be found within a series of contexts, means and procedures, which comprise both historical and material analysis. This firstly concerns the original finds they worked on, the museums that host them, the primary documentation concerning their treatment and publication; then come replicas, their distribution and multiple functions; archival material from the institutions having collaborated with them; information to be drawn from the direct (primary) and indirect (secondary) publications,

those firstly presenting their drawings and reconstitutions and those building upon these artifacts for the production of knowledge.

Knowledge can be further drawn and controlled via other archival data, as administrative and financial documents. It was also widely diffused by thematic exhibitions touching related subjects. Other sources of knowledge are of value, as contemporary press or memories of descendants, relatives or colleagues. But above all, entirely new knowledge is to be gained through the personal archive and bequest of the artist's family, for the efficient disclosure of which the adequate tools and methods are now sought. The following sub-topics range from the tangible (material, objects and archives) to the non-tangible documents (oral information, memory).

4.1 Archaeological Museums in Greece, original archaeological material

The Gilliérons are linked to central museums in Greece, as the Acropolis Museum, the National Archaeological Museum in Athens, the Numismatic museum, the Byzantine Museum in Athens, the Archaeological Museum of Heraklion and others in Crete, the Archaeological Museum of Volos etc. Archives concerning the history of these institutions may contain unpublished information related to these missions and could enhance the documentation of future expositions.

4.2 "Archaeological" material and archival data: the EFA Gilliéron Collection

The bequest entrusted since 2015 to the French School at Athens comprises collections of Prehistoric, Classical-Roman, Christian-Byzantine replicated "archaeological" material, as such related to Folklore, Royalty, political iconography, the first Olympic games, the Boy-Scouting movement and Tourism. It consists of an important number of molds, utensils, equipment and materials (Fig. 4). Artwork comprises oil paintings and aquarelles, pencil and ink drawings, sketches, proofs for publications, prints and gravures. Photography is represented by glass plates, negatives and printed matter. Themes comprise persons, monuments, places and artwork. Books concern scientific bibliography and manuals, as publications by the artists.



Fig. 3. Society of the Friends of the National Archaeological Museum of Athens: Seal by Gilliéron *Fils* (Friends of the NMA 1936, frontispiece). **Fig. 4.** Classification of material rests from the Gilliéron atelier (EFA 2017)

The Archive hosts printed, typed and handwritten documents, often combined with drawings and artwork; they concern personal and professional correspondence with colleagues and/or institutions, as matters of education, career, finance and private topics.

Testimonies of material culture are bearers of precious information, whatever their date. Greek law considers cultural goods (objects of material heritage) as "archaeological" when dated previous to 1830 ("N. 3028/2002. Για την προστασία των Αρχαιοτήτων και εν γένει της Πολιτιστικής Κληρονομιάς" 2002); if younger, they are considered as monuments of modern heritage (§2, §20). Independently from the legal classification by date, any object can be treated with traditional archaeological methodology and criteria (classification, description, typological analysis, statistics, visual illustration etc.). The equipment, products or by-products of a dynamic artistic atelier operated over three generations of artists, presents a direct source of information about the people, their projects, collaborations, repertoire, techniques and methods. This part of the legacy is the most singular, as it concerns artistic know-how related to the acquisition of archaeological knowledge. Official products of the shop are well documented, as they were sold worldwide. It is the underlying procedures, as the techniques that remain far less known.

4.3 Material culture, collections in institutions worldwide

When colorful publications were still scarce and slow to appear, it was often *via* Gilliérons replicas that the international community was informed and educated upon recent archaeological finds. These were part of the process of knowledge dissemination. Archaeologists acquired their first hands-on experiences in didactic collections, whereas replicas stimulated the curiosity of the broader public, functioning practically as teasers towards high-standard cultural travelling (Boucher 2017). A full list of the concerned collections has to be established, beyond the renowned ones (Lapatin 2017, 83–85). A **Digital Gilliéron** network may be launched, in order to establish a platform of digital humanities. Not only would this render neglected data more directly and centrally visible, but it would also connect institutions possessing similar heritage, stimulate exchange and research, and improve the flow of information towards the public.

4.4 Archival material, local and abroad

The progress achieved in the field of Digital Humanities leads to augmented visibility of hitherto unknown or inaccessible archival data. Even though access to original unpublished archaeological material often remains a difficult matter, for archives things have changed to the positive. State archives, as the archives of the Greek parliament, archives of the Archaeological Service (National Portal of Monuments), digital archives of educational institutions (Universities, National Hellenic Research Foundation etc.) are open for research; the archive of the Archaeological Society in Athens has been recently digitized and prepares for more open consultation. Archives of foreign archaeological schools assure access via professional infrastructure. General state archives, as their municipal branches are thriving. Private archives are being disclosed or handed over to specialized institutions. An initiative by the Association for the Preservation of Historical Documents and Cultural Heritage “Arxeion Taxis” has launched a Digital Humanities Resource for declaring archives at risk (“Archive Alert.” n.d.). All these resources may be of value for the present research theme.

4.5 Scientific publications, traditional scholarship, bibliography

Old publications are in many cases digitalized and OCR searchable, allowing thorough scrolling and renewed attentive reading of lengthy texts that may contain unnoticed data. Studies may be outdated, but in relation to the Gilliérons they contain contemporary information and scientific argumentation related to their work. They are the main material by which the gradual formation of current knowledge may be controlled and revisited.

4.6 Retrospective thematic exhibitions

The range of Gilliérons pioneering work is so extended, that different communities of scholarship are studying their case: the most evident are those of Bronze Age Archaeology and polychromy on Archaic Sculpture and Painting. Their work has often been object of museum exhibitions.

Their name is associated with the very first thematic exhibition of the Archaeological Museum in Athens, in 1934. É. Gilliéron *Fils* was charged to prepare an exhibit based on his replicas (Philadelphus 1936; Friends of the NMA 1936, 13, fig. 13). The Minoan culture was “imported” to Athens, when it was not yet easily accessible to the mainland public. More exhibitions followed, either focusing directly on the artists, or on more general topics but comprising their work. First followed A. Evans in 1936, with an exhibit on Minoan Crete in Great Britain (Marinatos 2015, 175–77). WW II brought a halt to such initiatives. The revival starts in the late 1980s or 1990s, with the Humboldt University in Berlin rearranging the old display of the Winckelmann Institute (Stürmer 1994, 7, 59), later expanding a similar approach in 2010 to the Archaeological Museum in Havana, which had earlier acquired Gilliéron replicas (Hemingway 2011, n. 2).

A culmination of retrospective or experimental exhibits on the Gilliéron topic is observed recently: the travelling German exhibition *Bunte Götter* on polychromy of ancient statues (Brinkmann and Scholl 2010) was followed in Greece by a display on colored archaic sculpture at the Acropolis Museum (Pantermalis 2012). In between came the retrospective on Gilliérons Bronze Age aquarelles at the MET in 2011 (Hemingway 2011), followed soon later by *La Grèce des origines* in Paris-St Germain en Laye in 2015 (Hemingway 2015). In 2017-18 an experimental project on *Replica Knowledge* took place in Berlin (Sattler, Simandiraki-Grimshaw, and Angermüller, n.d.). The recently rearranged Minoan collection of A. Evans in the Ashmolean Museum (Galanakis 2013) led to another exhibit on *Restoring the Minoans*, at the ISAW, New York University (Chi 2017); a thematic exhibit on aquarelles from Pompei and Demetrias was held at the University of Halle in May 2018 (Lehmann and Löhr, n.d.; Mitsopoulou, n.d.). More exhibitions are scheduled for 2018/2019. The efforts of the EFA and other institutions towards a thematic exposition on the Gilliérons are still in the making. The newly acquired archive of the artists by the EFA will provide a new starting point for Gilliéron studies.

4.7 Archaeological sciences, restauration, de-restauration; control of authenticity

As the Gilliérons are considered to have been the pioneers of Conservation of antiquities in Greece, the material rests of their atelier contain valuable information on the methods applied by them. Some of their interventions have been corrected or rejected by later scholarship, but their work rests a genuine product of their time. The material remains of the bequest are now under study by a team of specialists in Conservation Sciences from the Department of Conservation of Antiquities and Works of Art (University of West Attica), which examine the materials, techniques and equipment of the Gilliéron's atelier.

Furthermore, finds dating from the early phases of archaeological investigations may happen to present issues of authenticity. It took museums and scholarship more than a century in order to confront suspicions towards alleged forgeries, as the "Minoan" chryselephantine serpent figurines. Analysis of ivory showed that the date was not ancient and lead to the conclusion that the artifacts are modern products. The Ashmolean Museum in Oxford still exposes the so-called "Boy-God" donated by A. Evans; but the caption to the image informs that ivory is 230± years old and that it is a forgery of the 1920s (Lapatin 2002, 185, n. 12; Fitton 2013, 81, fig. 139-140; Lapatin 2017, 83, n. 32). Concerning the peculiar golden "Mycenaean" kylix of the Benaki Museum (Papageorgiou 2008; Kotzamani et al. 2008), analysis of the gold revealed divergence from other Mycenaean metal vases, indicating that its ancient date and originality may be dubious. In this case, the museum demonstrated an open mind in relation to one of its prominent pieces. By hosting these articles in their series, the institution encouraged control of knowledge *via* contemporary methods and new approaches to collections history. However, a visitor remains uninformed about such doubts. The procedure elaborated in the publications could be addressed by a thematic exposition, with the famous vase at its center. In most public Archaeological Museums the testing of important objects from the regular expositions is still not an easy procedure.

4.8 Photography

The power of image is unquestionable, and Photography is closely linked to the procedure of documentation in Archaeology (Dally 2017). Gilliéron *père* was a pioneer in the field, traveling with equipment and employing photographs in his regular work procedure. The archive contains a bulk of documents that will enrich their legacy of visual data. Other archives may contribute, once a call for further contributions will be launched. Images of the artists themselves are rare, and above all those showing them in action, in the field or at work.

4.9 3D digital tools

The Gilliérons were pioneers of replication of original antiquities in Greece, and developed their methods to a high level. Today's artists, conservators, copyists, professional designers as photographers dispose of entirely new techniques, materials and digital tools. The encounter of these two realities, the hands-on material procedures of the 19th-early 20th centuries, opposed to methods of 3D scanning and printing or even more advanced technologies and materials, is sure to reveal even more about the traditional skills and expertise of the artists, and their time.

4.10 Internet, generally

In the digital era, large-scale synthetical studies -as on the Gilliérons- are more likely to flourish than ever before. The new tool facilitates the rediscovery of their itineraries within a wealth of recently digitized documents, allowing correlations that would never have been possible earlier. The Gilliérons worked in a non-digital age, and had at their time the privilege to be amidst the first to be called when new finds surfaced; especially the most original, important and groundbreaking. They focused on the best objects; only major institutions or wealthy projects could allow themselves to hire them. The side-effect was that the Gilliérons were amongst the best informed scholarly artists of their times, long before definite publications with detailed illustrations became available for the international community of scholars. They worked at the center of the network of knowledge production, in advance of the broader scientific community. In case they transferred influences, ideas and motives from one site to another, it was improbable to have been observed in real time; but it can be retraced a century later, with the help of search engines and access to internationally dispersed data.

4.11 Journalism, press

Recent digitalization of old newspapers adds a precious source of contemporary information to our knowledge about the Gilliérons. Collections as the press archive of the Hellenic Parliament, or the digital depositories of research institutions now provide satisfactory access to Greek press. As the Gilliérons were famous and in charge of prominent projects, contemporary information can be drawn from this medium.

4.12 Oral History: Memory and Archaeology

Research in the field of Archaeology can profit from other methods, long employed by History and Social Anthropology: documentation of oral memory, via interviews and discussion with relatives, descendants or collaborators of the protagonists under examination. This method, proven fundamental in other fields of the Humanities and the educational process in museums (ICME-ICOM 2005; Gazi and Nakou 2015), may also contribute to the History of Archaeology and its display. If the social argument in favor of the participatory relationship with a broad public might not be easily applicable in case of Archaeology, the field can however gain from the voice of informants who may possess narratives of past generation's memories and experiences.

The field is promising in the case of the Gilliérons, as the last artist passed away only eight years ago, and had been alert about the history of his ancestors. Relatives, collaborators or descendants of colleagues are still alive. The first informant was Alfred Gilliéron himself, Émile père's grandson: he contributed on an important level, firstly by conserving the whole bequest (during wartime, house improvement and professional adventures), and secondly by generously sharing his memories and knowledge with any scholar who tried to access him: V. Stürmer and K. Lapatin are only two amongst them, whereas he even received the Swiss French author of fiction novels Alex Capus, who finally published a best selling novel, openly addressing the delicate topic of forged antiquities (Capus 2013, 281). His idea built upon long-existing doubts in archaeological scholarship (Lapatin 2002, 2017; Hemingway 2011; Marinatos 2015), but he released these with literary freedom to the general public, without assuring which part are unproven rumors, and which are real issues. For the non-specialist the novel is exciting, but the scenario remains impossible to be judged in depth by anyone without critical access to the procedure of knowledge establishment. This resulted in the propagation of a "myth" on behalf of Gilliéron *films*, before the opportunity had ripened for the scientific community to address the problem neutrally and with the necessary time distance. The public is nourished by suspicions, without having the full argumentation at hand. Literature and fiction, independent from scholarly rigor, are therefore another means of creating and disseminating "knowledge". Independently from its accuracy, scientific proofs or official producers of knowledge. Similar observations may apply to documentaries, if aiming mainly to impress.

4.13 Crowdsourcing - Linked Open Data

The simplification of publication procedures (editing, photography, easy access to online sites etc.) contributes strongly towards dissemination of information and crowdsourcing. Social media employed in the scientific environment allows networking, contact to unknown people and diffusion of news. Archaeological blogging is a flourishing activity, to the benefit of any interested person.

An anonymous reviewer of my submitted abstract contributed towards another important point: "if users of the project's data can trace and determine *"who said what in the past"*, they can make *better informed decision as to whom to trust and what opinion to form* about the cultures at hand". A database of scholarly references and criticisms to Gilliéron-related topics, organized upon an open data model, might allow the scientific community to share the task and invite any skilled scholar to offer their expertise in specialized matters. An example is the *Digital Muret* project (INHA n.d.). The list of Gilliéron's collaborations is so long, archival "data" so "big", dispersed and yet untamed, that no individual could be able to complete this task within reasonable delay. In order to advance towards a more efficient and critical level, thorough evaluation of available data and definition of the questions still open in scholarship, such a tool would allow acceleration of knowledge evaluation; to take advantage of established skills and rely on the expertise of active specialists, in order to be able to define the *desiderata* of research, the gaps and uncertainties of knowledge on which research should then focus and persist.

4.14 Online Database

If all the above "big data", produced from a broad number of collaborators, scholars and/or volunteer contributors shall be collected and installed on a central platform, such a tool has to be conceived at an early stage in order to grow with it. The needs of each research team will have to be taken into account; the design of the model will have to be secure and expandable, whereas individual users shall be able to undertake data feed-in or to address queries to the system. Further, it has to allow collaborative networking between institutions and existing websites and platforms, but also be user friendly and assure the protection of the original uploaded data. The above exposed axes and types of research are mentioned as preliminary guidelines for any future eligible partner who might contribute towards the needs of this young but promising project.

5 Conclusion

The Project “Archives Gilliéron” of the French School in Athens has become possible due to the donation of Émile Gaston Gilliéron, descendant of the artists, and to the Director of the EFA Alexandre Farnoux, who invested time towards its realization and provided the possibility to host the collection and the Project. Research is coordinated by C. Mitsopoulou (University of Thessaly) and O. Polychronopoulou (University of West Attica), and will involve specialists for all the abovementioned axes of research. The initiative presents a challenge, as it is situated at the transition between studies of antiquity and the modern periods of Greece, the second axe of the School’s targeting. It aims at a renewed examination of the History of Greek Archaeology. Simultaneously it aims to provide new insight into the society and microcosm of the protagonists that treated, restored, embellished and recreated major works of ancient art, and therefore influenced our current knowledge at its fundamental beginnings.

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Figures

Fig. 1.a-d. a. Snake Goddess; b. Bull Vase; c. *La Parisienne*; d. Faience facades (after Lifo Team 2016)

Fig. 2.a-b. a. Floral zone, frieze with putti, dancing or playing music; b. Main zone: seated woman with child, maenad and Satyr (?) in forestry landscape (Arvanitopoulos 1912, Pl. III by É. Gilliéron père).

Fig. 3. Society of the Friends of the National Archaeological Museum of Athens: Seal by Gilliéron Fils (*Εταιρεία των φίλων του Εθνικού Αρχαιολογικού Μουσείου*. 1936, frontispiece).

Fig. 4. Classification of material rests from the Gilliéron atelier (EFA 2017, C. Mitsopoulou)