

BULLETIN β'

An array of heterogeneous notes that provide points of interaction with the project's concept.

LA MUSE D'ANAPHE (PART I)



M. Kenna, L. Davydova, Hermitage, St. Petersburg, 2009.

La Muse d'Anaphé crossed my path in 2015, thanks to the correspondence with Professor Margaret Kenna on Anafi's various archaeological findings. The first time I saw her, she was standing in all her contrived beauty behind Margaret and Dr. Liudmila Davydova, curator of the statue department, in a 2009 photograph at the *Hermitage* of Saint Petersburg, where she is still now on display. In preparation for Phenomenon 3, immersed in my Anafi research on the Internet, at the *Bibliothèque Nationale de France* and at the *Archives Nationales* in St. Denis, I started to stumble into signals of a tortuous, perhaps unfinished, story. This is the first chapter of my findings.

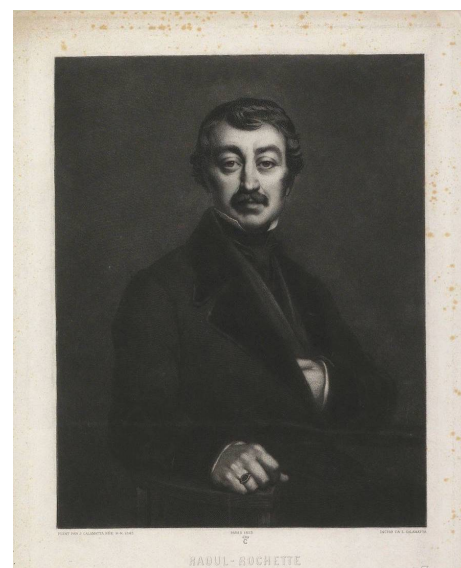
She is not a muse, as originally identified by the French archaeologists who, when first saw her, mistakenly attributed her origin to the classical period and misleadingly called her the *Muse de Santorin*. She is indeed likely to be a funerary statue, a supplicant, a votive statue or a priestess. She is 1,617cm and her head and neck have been sculpted separately. While in great conditions, her hands are

damaged. One commentator stated that the "swelling of one of the jaws recounted, without being so exaggerated as to impair the beauty of the figure, the nature of the morbid affection which had occasioned the making of a vow."¹

But let us start from the beginning.

La Muse d'Anaphé was discovered in 1823 in a field on Anafi by a group of locals, "du côté de la marine vers le sud en allant à Notre-Dame dite Παναγία Μαλαμιόπητα (sic)"², as one of Alby's letter would reveal. The news of her discovery spread very fast to Santorini, urging archaeology amateur Guillaume d'Alby to rush to Anafi to purchase the statue for an unspecified "large sum of money"³. D'Alby was a Greek and French national, a descendant of one of the French families ruling areas of the Aegean in the past, and hereditary consul of France in Santorini.

D'Alby took back the statue to his residence in Santorini and developed throughout the years a deep attachment to her. During the 1830s, he displayed the statue with pride when illustrious travellers visited him. This was the case of the then French ambassador to Greece, who, having found the statue very impressive, had allegedly entrusted famous French state archaeologist Raoul-Rochette to visit Santorini and evaluate the statue as a potential candidate for the *Louvre* collection. In a passionate 1838 letter to the French Minister of Education, Raoul-Rochette forcefully pledged for the statue to be brought to the *Louvre*. The letter is so remarkable that I prefer to translate some extracts directly rather than summarizing it for you.



Portrait of archeologist Raoul-Rochette, by Luigi Calamatta, 1853.

¹ De quelques antiquités rapportées de Grèce par M. François Lenormant, page 22, Gazette des Beaux-Arts, 1866, Paris.

² Inscriptiones Insularum Maris Aegaei, page 62, Fasciculus III, 1893, Berlin.

³ L'illustration universelle, Vol XLII, page 262, 1863, Paris.

“Dear Minister,

[...] our ambassador in Athens, one of the first ones to see and appreciate the statue, entrusted me with the mission of examining it very carefully as he believed the statue could enter the Louvre collection. [...]

As for its style, the statue belongs to a pure Greek school, probably from the time of Lysippos and Scopas; it is certainly one of the most skilfully crafted and elegantly sculpted draped statues from ancient Greece and, to express my thoughts in a few words, it is a work, if not of the same order, at least of the same family of our *Vénus de Milo*, found on a nearby island. You will judge, dear Minister, the merits of this statue, [...] all description I could make would necessarily be insufficient [...].

One needs to see the work with their own eyes to appreciate all that this statue can offer in all its purity and originality of the Greek style. [...] It is for me the junior sister of our *Vénus de Milo*. [...]

The owner of the statue, Mr. Alby, a French citizen and consul of France, believes he must reserve this monument to the country he serves and represents. [...] The acquisition therefore now only depends on the decision of the French government; and if I am not mistaken, the financial conditions put forward by our consul are so moderate and honourable that they could not be refused. [...]

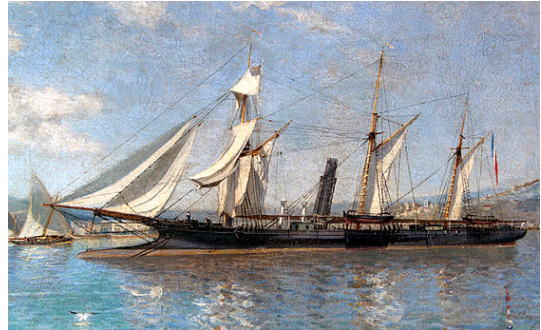
We only need to obtain the authorization of the Greek government, who will undoubtedly be pained to see a work of this stature leave the country. But while one may agree with the severity of the measures implemented by King Othon to stop the illegal export and sale of ancient Greek monuments - patrimony and pride of modern Greece - there are, for this case, specific considerations to be made in favour of France. [...]

If I am allowed to say so, France, that has shed vast quantities of blood and gold in the Hellenic struggle for independence, and this without expecting anything in return and, I believe, without actually obtaining anything in return, deserves to be allowed to take something; and a statue that belongs to a Frenchman in Greece could well be taken to France, without this costing anything to Greece. [...]

France, already so proud to own the *Vénus de Milo*, will be even prouder to see the *Muse de Santorin* placed by its side; and you, Sir, you will be able to applaud yourself for having contributed to this acquisition”⁴.

Many questions surround this letter? Was Raoul-Rochette really mandated by the French ambassador? Why wouldn't Mr. Alby donate the statue to his beloved motherland rather than

wanting to sell it even if for a “moderate and honourable” price? Will they be able to overcome the strictness of King Othon's art export laws?



Painting depicting an “aviso” from the 19th century.

Convinced by this very ‘persuasive’ narrative, the French government decided to send, a few months later, a military boat - “*un aviso*” - to collect the *Muse*. But, to the dismay of commentators, the boat which was supposed to collect the *Muse* from Santorini and bring her to France, crossed the Mediterranean only to return to the port of Toulon... empty⁵.

Clues about its subsequent fate were hiding in various sources in the *Archives Nationales de France*.

[End of Part I]

Piergiorgio Pepe, research notes, 2019.

LINES OF FLIGHT, LINES OF DEATH

The two great molar aggregates of the East and West are perpetually being undermined by a molecular segmentation causing a zigzag crack, making it difficult for them to keep their own segments in line. It is as if a line of flight, perhaps only a tiny trickle to begin with, leaked between the segments, escaping their centralization, eluding their totalization. The profound movements stirring in a society present themselves in this fashion, even if they are necessarily “represented” as a confrontation between molar segments. It is wrongly said (in Marxism in particular) that a society is defined by its contradictions. That is true only on the larger scale of things. From the viewpoint of micropolitics, a society is defined by its lines of flight, which are molecular. There is always something that flows or flees, that escapes the binary organizations, the resonance apparatus, and the overcoding machine: things that are attributed

⁴ *La France Littéraire*, pages 27-37, issue 25, 1838, Paris.

⁵ *L'illustration universelle*, Vol XLII, page 262, 1863, Paris.

to a "change in values," the youth, women, the mad, etc. [...]

But there is a fourth danger as well, and this is the one that interests us most, because it concerns the lines of flight themselves. We may well have presented these lines as a sort of mutation or creation drawn not only in the imagination but also in the very fabric of social reality; we may well have attributed to them the movement of the arrow and the speed of an absolute — but it would be oversimplifying to believe that the only risk they fear and confront is allowing themselves to be recaptured in the end, letting themselves be sealed in, tied up, reknotted, reterritorialized. They themselves emanate a strange despair, like an odor of death and immolation, a state of war from which one returns broken: they have their own dangers distinct from the ones previously discussed. This is exactly what led Fitzgerald to say: *"I had a feeling that I was standing at twilight on a deserted range, with an empty rifle in my hands and the targets down. No problem set—simply a silence with only the sound of my own breathing. ... My self-immolation was something sodden-dark."* Why is the line of flight a war one risks coming back from defeated, destroyed, after having destroyed everything one could? This, precisely, is the fourth danger: the line of flight crossing the wall, getting out of the black holes, but instead of connecting with other lines and each time augmenting its valence, turning to destruction, abolition pure and simple, the passion of abolition. Like Kleist's line of flight, and the strange war he wages; like suicide, double suicide, a way out that turns the line of flight into a line of death. [...]

This brings us back to the paradox of fascism, and the way in which fascism differs from totalitarianism. For totalitarianism is a State affair: it essentially concerns the relation between the State as a localized assemblage and the abstract machine of overcoding it effectuates. Even in the case of a military dictatorship, it is a State army, not a war machine, that takes power and elevates the State to the totalitarian stage. Totalitarianism is quintessentially conservative. Fascism, on the other hand, involves a war machine. When fascism builds itself a totalitarian State, it is not in the sense of a State army taking power, but of a war machine taking over the State. A bizarre remark by Virilio puts us on the trail: in fascism, the State is far less totalitarian than it is suicidal. There is in fascism a realized nihilism. Unlike the totalitarian State, which does its utmost to seal all possible lines of flight, fascism is constructed on an intense line of

flight, which it transforms into a line of pure destruction and abolition.

Gilles Deleuze and Felix Guattari, *A Thousand Plateaus*, 214-229, University of Minnesota Press, 1987.

THE FAINTEST STIRRING OF HOPE



Nevertheless, it seemed as if nothing had changed in the town. Silent as ever by day, the streets filled up at nightfall with the usual crowds of people, now wearing overcoats and scarves. Cafes and picture-houses did as much business as before. But on a closer view you might notice that people looked less strained, and they occasionally smiled. And this brought home the fact that since the outbreak of plague no one had hitherto been seen to smile in public. The truth was that for many months the town had been stifling under an airless shroud, in which a rent had now been made, and every Monday when he turned on the radio, each of us learned that the rift was widening; soon he would be able to breathe freely. It was at best a negative solace, with no immediate impact on men's lives. Still, had anyone been told a month earlier that a train had just left or a boat put in, or that cars were to be allowed on the streets again, the news would have been received with looks of incredulity; whereas in mid-January an announcement of this kind would have caused no surprise. The change, no doubt, was slight. Yet, however slight, it proved what a vast forward stride our townsfolk had made in the way of hope. And indeed it could be said that once the faintest stirring of hope became possible, the dominion of the plague was ended.

Albert Camus, *The Plague*, 271-272, Vintage Intl., 1991.