

Antonio Duplá Ansuategui, Eleonora Dell' Elicine,  
Jonatan Pérez Mostazo (eds.)

# *Antigüedad clásica y naciones modernas en el Viejo y el Nuevo Mundo*



*Antigüedad clásica y naciones modernas  
en el Viejo y el Nuevo Mundo*

© De los textos, sus autores

© Ediciones Polifemo  
Avda. de Bruselas, 47 - 5º  
28028 Madrid  
[www.polifemo.com](http://www.polifemo.com)

ISBN: 978-84-16335-47-3  
Depósito Legal: M-21163-2018

Impresión: Namac Comunicación, S.L.  
Avenida Valdelaparra, 27 - naves 18 y 19  
28108 ALCOBENDAS (MADRID)

Antonio Duplá Ansuategui, Eleonora Dell' Elicine,  
Jonatan Pérez Mostazo (eds.)

*Antigüedad clásica y naciones modernas  
en el Viejo y el Nuevo Mundo*



*Ediciones Lolifemo*

Madrid 2018

<i>Introducción,</i>	
A. Duplá Ansuategui, E. Dell' Elicine, J. Pérez Mostazo	9
<i>Prólogo. Naciones, historia y ciencias sociales,</i>	
José Álvarez-Junco	19

I

*En el Viejo Mundo*

<i>Algunas consideraciones sobre la concepción de la historia, la Antigüedad y la nación en la Real Sociedad Bascongada de Amigos del País,</i>	
Antonio Duplá Ansuategui	31
<i>Entre Ilerda y Emporion:</i>	
<i>etnicidad y clasicismo en las raíces del nacionalismo catalán,</i>	
Jordi Cortadella	55
<i>La arqueología en la construcción de la historia de España:</i>	
<i>de los viajes anticuarios ilustrados al Catálogo Monumental de España,</i>	
Gloria Mora	75
<i>Viriato en el Congreso de los Diputados:</i>	
<i>de la Gloriosa a la disolución de las Cortes en España (1868-1939),</i>	
Pilar Iguácel, Pepa Castillo	101
<i>La Antigüedad en acción.</i>	
<i>El sermón sobre la destrucción de la cultura nacional española,</i>	
Ignacio Peiró Martín	127
<i>Arcaísmo y clasicismo en el pensamiento de Pierre Paris:</i>	
<i>los escultores griegos a la conquista del movimiento,</i>	
Grégory Reimond	155
<i>Winning History. Nationalistic Classical Reception</i>	
<i>in German Board and Card Games from the "Long 19<sup>th</sup> Century",</i>	
Martin Lindner	183

<i>Images of Rome: Classical Rome and the United Kingdom, 1880 to 1930,</i> Richard Hingley .....	211
<i>Antiquity and Modern Nations in the Liebig Trading Cards,</i> Marta García Morcillo .....	227

## II

### *En el Nuevo Mundo*

<i>La huella griega en el Senado de los EE.UU.,</i> Clelia Martínez Maza .....	257
<i>Cuando la Antigüedad no puede ser más que moderna.</i> <i>Identidades complejas en el escenario imperial español de finales del siglo XVIII,</i> José M. Portillo Valdés .....	279
<i>La Antigüedad clásica y la red protonacional neogranadina (1767-1803),</i> Ricardo del Molino García .....	301
<i>Pasado clásico y nación moderna: los usos de la Antigüedad en la construcción de un proyecto político para la Nación Argentina (1837-1852),</i> Eleonora Dell' Elicine .....	323
<i>ÍNDICE DE NOMBRES Y LUGARES</i> .....	339
<i>RELACIÓN DE AUTORAS Y AUTORES</i> .....	359

I

*EN EL VIEJO MUNDO*

*Antiquity and Modern Nations  
in the Liebig Trading Cards*

Marta García Morcillo



## 1. PREFACE

The history of modern European nationalism, as well as that of printed advertising, was to a large extent formed during the so-called “Long Nineteenth Century”. Nationalism was a powerful idea that not only penetrated the world of politics, but also shaped social and cultural collective identities. Printed advertising was an encoded communication language that impacted the life of individuals and communities alike, forever changing the physiognomy of urban spaces. These phenomena were entwined with each other, both fostered by messages that promised a future of progress and well-being, a new world in which individual and collective aspirations could finally be fulfilled. Towards the end of the century, nationalism made frequent use of advertising techniques and strategies, while also becoming a leitmotiv embedded in popular commercial adverts. The formation and ascent of modern European nations led to a reconsideration of the ancient past as being at the service of not only modern political agendas, but also of cultural and commercial enterprises. One of them was the *Liebig Extract of Meat Company*. My contribution will focus on the innovative marketing strategy of this successful international brand throughout its hundred-year history. As I will discuss in the following pages, *Liebig* “conquered” the European market thanks not only to the qualities attributed to the product and its affordable price, but also to the visually appealing, collectable lithographs that customers exchanged for coupons. The cards became effective instruments of persuasion that were intended to reaffirm the product’s legitimacy. As I will try to show, the *Liebig Company* had a significant impact not only on the history of nutrition, but also on marketing and education. The interaction between these three aspects is still a relatively understudied angle in European histories of the 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> centuries. I will look specifically at the relevant presence of ancient themes in the *Liebig* trading cards, with particular focus on the ideas and episodes that contributed to the promotion of national identities. My paper will attempt to demonstrate that the company followed compatible yet differentiated marketing strategies in the countries where the product was distributed. The themes of the *Liebig* cards also incorporated ideological, political and economic trends (such as colonialism) that were modelled on European nationalisms and their revisionism of the past. Lastly, I will discuss *Liebig’s* effectiveness as a cultural engine that contributed to the formation of collective identities.

2. A “NUTRITIONAL REVOLUTION”:

THE GENESIS AND SUCCESS OF CANNED FOOD

The *Extractum carnis Liebig* was a concentrated beef extract created by the German chemist Justus von Liebig (1803-1873) in the 1840s. Liebig was one of the founders of organic chemistry, and during his lifetime he made substantial contributions to the fields of agriculture and nutritional chemistry.<sup>1</sup> The *extractum carnis* was intended to replace real meat while keeping its nutritional value. The social aspirations of this innovation was to palliate the needs of huge undernourished groups of the population that were increasingly forced to leave their country life to live in industrialised cities.<sup>2</sup> This ideal met with the postulates of materialist publicists such as Ludwig Büchner and Jacob Moleschott, who in the 1850s popularised the principle «Man ist was er isst» (One is what one eats). This motto encompassed the idea that food for the stomach was as important as food for the brain, and that for the majority of people, life conditions could be substantially improved through better education and nutrition.<sup>3</sup>

After obtaining Liebig's permission to develop and commercialise the product under his name, in 1863 the German entrepreneur Georg Christian Giebert created the company *Fray Bentos Giebert & Co.* and in 1864 opened a huge factory at the harbour of Fray Bentos in Uruguay (Judel 2003, 6-17).<sup>4</sup> Here, industrial production substantially reduced the costs of the canned product, which could be easily stored and transported without depending on refrigeration, unlike fresh meat.<sup>5</sup> In the following year (1865), Giebert established *Liebig's Extract of Meat Company*. Competitors soon appeared, leading the company to create a trademark to avoid imitations and promote the product. The main European base of the company was Antwerp (Belgium), from

<sup>1</sup> In 1867 he created a substitute for maternal milk. On Liebig's relevance for the history of nutrition, see Finlay 1995 and Swinburne 1996.

<sup>2</sup> For the demographic and social impact of industrialisation, see for instance Kaelble 1984.

<sup>3</sup> Liebig's own achievements had a remarkable influence on Büchner's manifesto *Kraft und Stoff* (1855). Jacob Moleschott saw in a healthy diet and nutrition the keys for a global vision of science, philosophy and politics. On the impact of these theories in Germany and Europe, see Burrow 2000, 33-39; Kamminga 1995.

<sup>4</sup> The city of Fray Bentos grew alongside the factory, which had around 5,000 employees in its heyday.

<sup>5</sup> Large-scale transport via refrigerated cargo-ships did not become economically profitable until the 1910s. As a result, prices of beef started decreasing, which ineludibly affected commercialisation of meat-concentrate, cf. Judel 2003, 15.

where the product was redistributed to almost every European country.<sup>6</sup> The company experienced a period of spectacular growth between 1864 and 1914. Production declined gradually after WWI due to growing competition within the sector. From 1924, the company was fully established in Europe and continued to be active in the following decades.<sup>7</sup> The history of *Liebig's* long success must be told in relation to a brilliant marketing strategy that turned the product into an indispensable domestic good and a brand associated with knowledge.

### 3. A "MARKETING REVOLUTION": LITHOGRAPHY AND PRINTED ADVERTISING

From the 1870s, *Liebig* became an inevitable commodity within middle and low-class urban households. This rapid success was not only the result of the attributed benefits of the product, its reasonable price and effective distribution, but also of a clever marketing idea that promoted canned meat as a reliable and familiar component of any kitchen. The popularity of the *Liebig Meat Extract* was also inextricably linked with the stunning, colourful and collectable trading cards (chromos) that were exchanged for purchase vouchers.

Trading cards already existed in the 17<sup>th</sup> century. Yet it was not until the 19<sup>th</sup> century that visual advertising on posters and in pamphlets, magazines, newspapers and other printed media really conquered the public spaces of flourishing cities and became leitmotifs of urban everyday life (McFall 2004, 167-172).<sup>8</sup> The ubiquity of advertising was the result of significant developments in printing technology in the 1870s, which made it possible to produce full-coloured lithographies at a low cost.<sup>9</sup> Chromolithography paved the way for a new age of commercial advertising, while also opening new avenues to innovative artistic languages.<sup>10</sup> As Walter Benjamin put it,

<sup>6</sup> In Britain, the product was commercialised by the *Liebig's* stardust and later independent company *OXO*.

<sup>7</sup> One of the important markets of meat-concentrate was the army, cf. Swinburne 1996, 250. In 1968, *Liebig* merged with the major Tea company *Brooke Bond Ltd* (London), which also owned *OXO*, and became *Brooke Bond Liebig Benelux NV*, which was purchased in 1981 by the multinational food company *Unilever Plc*.

<sup>8</sup> The spread of visual advertisements and consumer culture in urban life is famously epitomised in the figure of Baudelaire's *flâneur*, See Hazel Hahn 2006; Salmi 2008, 92-97.

<sup>9</sup> The lithographic technique was invented by Alois Senefelder in 1798 in Munich.

<sup>10</sup> Printed media were soon adopted by new art-movements like Art Nouveau, Arts & Crafts and the Secession.

«lithography made it possible for graphic art to accompany everyday life with pictures». <sup>11</sup>

The innovative idea of using collectable chromos for commercial promotion is traditionally attributed to the owner of the first and most famous Parisian department store, *Au Bonne Marché* (today *Le Bonne Marché*, founded in 1838), Aristide Boucicaut. Like *Au Bonne Marché*, *Liebig* made use of the most prestigious lithographic printers in Paris. <sup>12</sup> These presses were directly involved in the work of celebrated fin-de-siècle *afficheistes*, such as Chéret, Bonnard, Toulouse-Lautrec and Mucha. The *Liebig* cards were developed parallel to these trends, but were also greatly influenced by the aesthetics of pictorial Historicism, which achieved high circulation mostly due to book-engravings.

*Liebig* chromos were also innovative in their conception. On the back of the cards, collectors found useful recipes and messages that guaranteed the authenticity and the nutritional value of the product, while the front was illustrated with images and didactic captions that formed part of a series of 6 thematically connected chromos. The completion of the series obviously depended on the number of cards in circulation, but also on the loyalty of the customer. <sup>13</sup> This clever marketing strategy contributed to validate the product and consolidate the prestige of the brand.

The potential of printed advertising as a commercial art did not go unnoticed among contemporary intellectuals. In clear opposition to established cultural traditions, poets like Rimbaud, Apollinaire and Blaise Cendrars celebrated advertisements as refreshing expressions of the modern industrial world, as announcements of the future to come. <sup>14</sup> Particularly illustrative are Cendrars's early poems, in which the poet consciously plays with the interaction between the function and language of both poetry and advertising. One of them, *Hamac* (1913), an homage to Apollinaire, includes *Liebig* among the catalogue of articles that composed the studio of the poet. <sup>15</sup> Long before scholars became interested in this phenomenon,

<sup>11</sup> Benjamin 2008 (1936), esp. 4-21.

<sup>12</sup> Such as Appel, Testu & Massin; F. Champenois; D. Hutinet and Klingenberg. Later on, cards were also produced in Belgium. From 1962 onwards, the cards were only distributed in Italy.

<sup>13</sup> According to the *Saguinetti catalogue* (2015), more than 11.000 types and 1871 series (of 6 cards) were created between 1870 and 1975. Some of them were reprinted.

<sup>14</sup> Among his so-called *Poèmes Zutiques* (1871), Rimbaud included *Paris*, a poem that evoked advertisements on walls.

<sup>15</sup> Cendrars' *affiche* of Apollinaire's studio aims to praise his personality, cultural taste and heterogeneous interests: «...*Oxo-Liebig fait frise dans ta chambre / Les livres en estacade...*». In *Atelier*

avant-garde poets had captured the power of commercial advertising to shape everyday life and cultural imagination.

*Liebig's* capacity to successfully communicate with its audience went hand in hand with its ability to impact collective memories. The unbeaten marketing of this global product was the result of the effective promotion of its dietetic virtues, advantageous price, and the culturally and aesthetically attractive trading cards.

#### 4. AN "EDUCATIONAL REVOLUTION":

##### A COLLECTABLE ENCYCLOPAEDIA

The colourfully drawn stories of the *Liebig* cards were highly effective in winning the loyalty of consumers – who were also card-collectors – in the long-term. For many poorer consumers, the beautiful cards and their explanatory labels may have been one of the few affordable visual instruments that permitted them to explore the world beyond their domestic and – often very local – living environments. The collectable *Liebig* cards played an important role in the penetration of cultural ideas in the context of the home. Its impact was similar to history books and other growing forms of cultural entertainment such as board games, magic lantern slides, stereoscopes, praxinoscopes and similar portable visual devices.<sup>16</sup> From the very start, the company celebrated *Liebig* and its product as protagonists of the human progress associated with nutrition. This marriage between culture, sciences and industry found its greatest expression in the World Fairs that were modelled on the Great Exhibition of 1851 (London). Along with nations, companies saw these events as unique opportunities of marketing (McFall 2004, 118-130);<sup>17</sup> *Liebig* was no exception.<sup>18</sup> In the Brussels exhibitions (1897, 1910, 1935), the company erected buildings that aimed to promote

---

(*Dix-neuf poèmes élastiques* 1919), Cendrars introduces the commercial slogan of a label from a tomato sauce while describing the studio of the painter Chagall. As Noland points out, Cendrars elevated advertising to modern-life art and its slogans to poetic metaphors (1999, 106-111).

<sup>16</sup> On the transformation of culture consumption in the domestic sphere throughout the 19<sup>th</sup> century, see Salmi 2008, 73-77. On the cultural impact of early board games, see Lindner, this volume.

<sup>17</sup> Great Exhibitions were also excellent chances for the promotion of nations and cities as "brands" associated with prosperity and progress, cf. Mitchell 1989.

<sup>18</sup> See for instance the card series n. 624 (1900), devoted to the pavilions of the Exposition Universelle de Paris.

*Liebig* as a modern wonder of the world.<sup>19</sup> Similarly, the content of the cards was intended to link the product with collectable knowledge, along with the individual and collective ideals, aspirations and values attached to it.

In addition to achievements of industrialised societies, the *Liebig* cards paid particular attention to advances in other fields of medicine, scientific and cultural knowledge, including food.<sup>20</sup> *Liebig* was a Western product with a very Eurocentric way of viewing the World, its past, present and future. As such, the lithographs met the cultural traditions and identities of the countries in which the flasks were largely sold. Specific editions of the card sets in different languages were also created for national markets. According to the *Sanguinetti catalogue* (xii), from 1871 to 1975 a total of 1.871 unique card-sets were produced. Around 500 of them contained at least one image linked to the Ancient World, including 89 full sets exclusively dedicated to Ancient topics. This means that in total, around 25% of the cards were devoted to ancient iconographies, cultural features, historical events and characters, myths and legends. The early cards show a particular interest in cultural topics, traditions, daily-life and the history of science and technology.<sup>21</sup> The decade that preceded WWI was the company's most successful and profitable period, which coincided with a significant interest in historical ancient topics.

The Ancient World provided a repertoire of reliable and recognisable imageries, which met the brand's purpose to establish a solid rhetoric of legitimacy and prestige around the product. In the *Liebig* lithographs, the history of bread, beer and wine is as important as the fall of Troy, Alexander's conquests and the Punic Wars, while the invention of meat extract deserves the same recognition as famous revolutionary discoveries in the history of science. The cards were essentially instruments of seduction that attracted consumer-collectors to the product through images and stories that were attached to cultural traditions and knowledge, thus creating meaning beyond its specific qualities as a commodity.<sup>22</sup> The product so profusely celebrated in the

<sup>19</sup> Particularly remarkable was the pavilion built for the 1910 exhibition, which consisted of a hybrid building midway between a shop, a monument and a temple.

<sup>20</sup> N. 706 (1902) is a series on the history of bread, starting with an image of a Pompeian bakery and concluding with an industrial vapour bread-factory.

<sup>21</sup> Some early examples show the great variety of ancient topics, such as the *Odyssey* (n. 166, 1883-1885); mythology (n. 469, 1896); women (n. 514, 1897); education (n. 214, 1888); war-machines (n. 822, 1905); houses (n. 875, 1907); festivals (n. 928, 1908); and emperors (n. 897, 1907).

<sup>22</sup> Adorno (1991 (1944), 53) specifically describes the role of advertising as a mechanism that links the market with culture. McRury (2009, 114-117) writes about the process of de-commodification of products through successful advertising.

World Fairs was thus much more than just the outcome of a successful international enterprise – it was also intended to be acknowledged as a repository of transferable symbols, values and identities that provided the best for both body and mind.<sup>23</sup>

## 5. ANCIENT WORLD AND MODERN NATIONS

Commercial advertising is a fundamental tool in the promotion of national identities and ideologies (Kühschelm-Eder-Siegrist 2012; Aronczyk 2013). The expansion of the *Liebig* company from the last decades of the 19<sup>th</sup> century inexorably mirrored the significant changes and events – including wars – that marked the history of Europe and its nations in subsequent decades. Early *Liebig* cards paid particular attention to memorable historical episodes, folklore and myths as well as distinctive ethnographic and cultural traits that contributed to the creation of coherent pictures of collective memories and national identities. Series on flags, hymns, anthems, passports, armies, typical dresses and dances proliferated on the early cards.<sup>24</sup> The interest in these elements must be placed in the context of the rise of nationalism and the consequences that arose from important contemporary political and military events. The unification of Germany and Italy, the formation of the Triple Alliance and the Triple Entente after the Franco-Prussian War (1870-1871) are reflected in the selection and representation of certain topics on the cards, and certainly affected their distribution. The incorporation of Alsace and Lorraine into the Second Reich did not prevent the card designers from including Alsace in a series exclusively created for the French market.<sup>25</sup> A very early card series (n. 34, 1875), entitled *Cartes géographiques et monnaies*, inventively covered the contested

<sup>23</sup> Barthes (1963) describes advertising as a prophetic act aimed at fulfilling promises. Croning (2004) refers to the capacity of adverts to bring objects to life. Traditional values, imageries and symbols aim to create forms of identification between object and purchaser, cf. Sauvageot 1987; Cottin 2001.

<sup>24</sup> See for instance n. 90 (1878/83), *Chants nationaux*; n. 92 (1878/83), *Passeports des différents pays*; n. 208 (1887), *Drapeaux nationaux*; n. 231 (1889), *Costumes nationaux*; n. 291 (1891), *Boissons nationales*.

<sup>25</sup> In 1890, the series *Provinces de France I* (n. 281) included Alsace. The Alsatian *Dance du Coq* was part of a series on typical French dances published in 1900. By contrast, a much earlier card set – closer to the conflict – entitled *Scènes populaires alsaciennes* avoided any reference to the territorial adscription (n. 65, 1878/83). Armies of different countries and periods feature frequently on sets until the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century.

region with the *Liebig* flask on the two maps that showed France and Germany. In the same vein, the triumphant chancellor Bismark was profusely celebrated on cards purely printed in Germany, and German *Kinderreime* were stamped only for audiences of the new Reich.<sup>26</sup> The geopolitical sensibility of the cards mirrored *Liebig's* interest in boosting the success of the product in these two large European markets despite their political / military conflicts.

In line with the portraits of material prosperity, the modern nation gave birth to images of a flourishing present and a future of harmony and progress. It also fixed scenes of a memorable past that sought to unify the nation's identity, while simultaneously issuing rhetorical strategies of political, cultural and military legitimacy. Despite the temporal distance, the popular stories, figures and icons from Classical Antiquity were a familiar set of imageries in Western collective memories, and thus also participated in the celebration of pan-European and Western identities (Hamilakis 2000; Talalay 2004). But beyond its universal and enduring appeal, Antiquity also represented both a challenge and a controversial realm for the modern nation-states, and thus for *Liebig's* marketing strategies.

### 5.1. *Antiquity and National Histories*

Certain events and characters from ancient history were typically redefined throughout the 19<sup>th</sup> century as foundational episodes that paved the way for the modern nation. Matching chronologies of continuity between ancient peoples and modern states conveniently contributed to the reaffirmation of national identities, while also supporting the claims of ancient ethnic origins and contested territories, as can be seen above (Anderson 2006 (1983), 187-206).

For example, consider the first card set devoted to the history of France, dated to 1893 (n. 398). The diachronic selection of episodes of the series starts with Vercingetorix' defeat by the Romans in Alesia (52 BC), which is followed by a heroic scene showing the bishop of Troyes, Saint Lupus, defending the city against attack from Attila and the Huns in AD 451. The next lithography displays the baptism of the first Christian king of France, the Merovingian Clovis (AD 496). The heroism of the first Carolingian king, Pepin the Short (754), precedes two cards devoted to his son Charlemagne: the death of Roland (778) and the coronation of the King in Rome (780). The selection aims to both signify and dignify the early heroes of the nation.

<sup>26</sup> N. 253 (1889); 285 (1890). Similarly, French songs with music appeared only in France in 1878/83 (n. 67, 68, 69). N. 581 (1899) was devoted to Bismarck.



The lithograph portraying Vercingetorix, a loose reading of Caesar's *Commentaries* and Plutarch, immortalises the iconic moment in which the Gallic king surrenders to Caesar in front of the Roman camp.<sup>27</sup> The image depicts Vercingetorix as heroic, still on his horse and proudly holding weapons in his hands, though his Gallic helmet lies already on the floor. In front of him, a crowned Caesar flanked by the symbols of his authority (the *fascēs* and the military standards) and surrounded by his army, regards the scene from his seat: a ceremonial performance of static majestic power confronted by a dynamic gesture of dignity by the defeated king. This illustration captures one of the most iconic moments in popular Western imagination, and elevates Vercingetorix to the "hall of fame" for heroes of the French nation. However, the inclusion of the courageous – yet still defeated – Gauls in the essential repertoire of key early historical episodes of the nation-to-be was not unanimously recognised in France until well into the second half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, when the ambivalent views towards the Gauls gave way to patriotic re-evaluations of Vercingetorix as an incarnation of the future nation's spirit.<sup>28</sup> During the Second Empire Napoleon III, a well-known admirer of Roman civilisation, nonetheless recognised the heroic sacrifice of the Gallic King as an unavoidable step towards the merging of both Gauls and Romans that made the birth of the glorious French nation possible.<sup>29</sup> The idea of Alesia as a "*défaite créatrice*" was born.<sup>30</sup> This idea crystallised in the famous gigantic statue of Vercingetorix by Aimé Millet that was erected on the site of Alesia (Alise-Sainte-Reine) in 1865. The positive revisionism of the conquered Gauls grew substantially after the Franco-Prussian War in 1870. The bitter defeat in Sedan was soon compared with that of Alesia, and Vercingetorix emerged as the heroic leader of a nation that, like the French, unsuccessfully attempted to defend the Rhine. The *Leibig* card mirrors this geopolitical scenario, and the plethora of images of Alesia as an example of national pride that proliferated in this period. More specifically, we find close parallels between the

<sup>27</sup> Caesar, *BG* 7.89; Plut. *Caes.* 27.

<sup>28</sup> Until the 19<sup>th</sup> century, Vercingetorix was traditionally considered as a barbarian king of an uncivilised culture rightly conquered by the Romans. Accordingly, traditional histories of France tended to start with the Franks. On the changing attitudes towards the pre-Roman past and the positive re-reading of the Celtic tradition by 19<sup>th</sup> century French Nationalism, see Dietler 1994, 587-593.

<sup>29</sup> Woolf (1996, 30), discusses the heroic past as a social capital of national identities.

<sup>30</sup> On Alesia as a national foundational myth, see Amalvi 1984, 294-295; Dietler 1994, 588-590; Giardina and Vauchez 2000, 159-162. On Alesia in French history books before and after the Franco-Prussian War, see Ueffing 2009.

*Liebig* lithograph and several historical paintings and book illustrations printed from the 1860s onwards, particularly after 1871, at the start of the Third Republic. This is the case with the book engraving made by E. Bure and modelled on the design by Félix Philippoteaux for Henri Martin's *Histoire de France populaire* (tome 1, 1867, p. 31). The composition of the scene, along with the determinedly heroic pose of the defeated Vercingetorix on horseback in Philippoteaux' design (and on the *Liebig* card) seems to have been inspired by popular previous paintings of the victorious Napoleon by the same artist.<sup>31</sup> This image was reprinted in later historical works, books illustrations, paintings and sculptures that reflected the national spirit after Sedan.<sup>32</sup> A 1903 *Liebig* card series on great conquerors in universal history – which excludes Roman rulers – shows a recreation of the same scene and the enduringly good form of the Gallic king.<sup>33</sup>

At the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, the tension between France and Germany over the contested territories on the left flank of the Rhine was still latent, and the *Liebig* cards responded to this with differentiated approaches to quite sensitive themes.<sup>34</sup> Beyond these political struggles, the celebration of Alesia as a national episode also mirrored the 19<sup>th</sup> century European revisionism of Roman imperialism and the role of the “barbaric peoples”.

*Customs of the ancient Germans* (n. 768) was a series printed in 1904 that illustrated the bucolic way of life of Germanic peoples, including hunting scenes, political assemblies, banquets and musical customs, as well as the collective rituals linked with the solstice's cycles. All in all, the set transmits an idyllic, positive view of a “barbarian” civilisation that, in contrast to the highly urbanised Romans, lived in

<sup>31</sup> Notably *Napoleon at the Battle of Rivoli* (oil on canvas, 1845). Philippoteaux was also specialised in large-scale depictions of sites and battles for panoramas and cycloramas. His first and most famous cyclorama was precisely a (today lost) recreation of the Siege of Paris during the Franco-Prussian War.

<sup>32</sup> E.g. Henri Lebrun's, *Histoire de France*, vol. II, Paris 1890. A famous pictorial representation is *Vercingétorix se rendant au camp de César* by Henri-Paul Motte (1886). The same image inspired the engraving from Edmond Ollier's *Cassell's Illustrated Universal History*, t. 2, 1890. Lionel Royer's painting *Vercingétorix jette ses armes aux pieds de César* (1899) also circulated as a typical book-engraving.

<sup>33</sup> N. 725 (1903): Tutmosis III, Cyrus, Alexander, Vercingetorix, the Second Caliph Omar and Charlemagne.

<sup>34</sup> Card sets n. 680, 681, 682 (1901), not printed in France, focus specifically on German places on the Rhine. The last of them is a history of the region, which includes a scene entitled with the famous patriotic hymn *Die Wacht am Rhein* (The Watch on the Rhine), which celebrated Bismarck's triumph at Sedan.



Fig. 1.  
 Migrazione dei Popoli *Volkerwanderung*, 1905.  
 Liebig Sanguinetti, cat. 12 n. 824.



Fig. 2.  
*Vestigia della dominazione romana in Africa*, 1914-1920.  
Liebig Sanguinetti cat. 12 n. 1106.

harmony with nature (Lindner 2015). In the following year, *Liebig* printed a card set in three languages (Italian, French and German) dedicated to the so called *Völkerwanderung* or Migration Period of the 5<sup>th</sup> century (n. 824) (Fig. 1). The set is devoted to Alaric and the Visigoths, Genseric and the Vandals, Attila and the Huns, the Roman Flavius Aetius (who defeated the Huns in 451), Odoacer, the first king of Italy, and Theodoric the Great, King of the Ostrogoths. A closer look at the cards allows us to contextualise *Liebig's* approach to this controversial period within the growing revisionism of the Migration Period in countries like Germany and France. The design of the cards combines spectacular depictions with didactical resources such as maps, individualised portraits of the protagonists, iconographic symbols, informative captions and extensive texts.

The first card is devoted to Alaric's negotiations with the Romans at the city gates in 410, the prolegomenon of the famous sacking of the city by the Visigoths.<sup>35</sup> The text on the reverse refers to the discussions between the senate and the people of Rome, who had twice expelled the Visigoth army thanks to generous payments of gold. It also mentions the internal treachery that resulted in the fatal opening of the gates and the sacking of the city. The lithograph shows Alaric on horseback in a dominant, majestic position, flanked by his soldiers and facing the masses of supplicant senators, soldiers and citizens. The plunder of Rome is suggested only by the dark clouds that menace the cityscape in the background. Interestingly, both the Romans and the Visigoths are treated with a certain equality – despite the almost hopeless position of the Romans. The lithograph thus paints a positive portrait of the civilised –and Christian– Alaric, which contrasts with the iconic imageries of the savage plundering of Rome that populated post-classical imageries.<sup>36</sup> Favourable readings of Alaric and the Visigoths can be traced back to Augustine and Orosius<sup>37</sup> and found a solid reception in more recent cultural traditions.<sup>38</sup> Above all, they played a relevant part in the discourse of Roman decadence elaborated during the Enlightenment and revisited by Herder,

<sup>35</sup> Olympiodorus, fr. 11; Orosius, *Historia adversus paganos* 7.37-43; Zosimus, *Historia Nova* 5.34-45; Procopius, *De Bello Vandalico* 3.2.7-39.

<sup>36</sup> The atypical depiction of the dramatic events of 410 on the Liebig cards is noted by Schlange-Schoeningen 2009, 42. Examples in painting includes Joseph-Noël Sylvestre's version of the scene (1890).

<sup>37</sup> Orosius, *Historia adversus paganos* 7.39.

<sup>38</sup> See for instance, early book engravings of *De Civitate Dei* by Pierre Gérard and Jean Du Pré (1486/7), and the epic poem by Georges de Scudéry *Alaric or Rome Vaincue* (1654), in which the sack of Rome is presented as a mission of re-Christianisation of Romans that had been conquered by vice and immorality.

which took roots in 19<sup>th</sup> century nationalist discourses (Demougeot 1988).<sup>39</sup> The German text on the reverse of the *Liebig* card reminds the reader of the popular ballad *Das Grab im Busento* (1828) by August Graf von Platen. The ballad evoked the famous story of Alaric's death in Cosenza (Southern Italy), when about to cross into North Africa with his army, and the secret burial constructed in the bed of the Busento river. This tale alluded to the legend of the gold of the Visigoths supposedly buried with their King, as narrated by the 6<sup>th</sup> century author Jordanes (551).<sup>40</sup>

The card portraying Genseric follows a similar approach, displaying the peaceful landing of the Vandals on the coast of North Africa in 428. The text details the course of the migration of the Germanic tribe, from the Rhine to Spain, then on to Africa. It also emphasises the rebuilding of Carthage by Genseric, who settled the capital of their new kingdom there in 439. Interestingly the *Liebig* caption compares this initiative with the fatal punishment of the Punic city by Scipio, thus proposing a curious binary opposition between destructive Romans and constructive Vandals.<sup>41</sup> Even if the card recalls the origin of the term “vandalism” in the massive destructions provoked by the Vandals, there is no direct mention of the sacking of Rome in 455, which inspired painters and book-engravers throughout the 19<sup>th</sup> century.<sup>42</sup>

By contrast, the card illustrating Attila narrates the explicit violence of the invasion of the Huns in 444. The text on the back explains the route of his devastating campaigns from the Danube to Germany and Gaul, as well as his defeat in 451, and his attempt to obtain the hand of Honoria, the sister of emperor Valentinian III. In the German version, there is also a reference to the Nibelungen legend, which tells that

<sup>39</sup> For the link between this tradition and the geopolitical tensions between Germany and France up to WWII, see Schlange-Schoeningen 2009, 42-46.

<sup>40</sup> Jordanes, *Getica* 30.157-8. Jordanes follows Cassiodorus. See also Olympiodorus, *fr.* 11.2-4, 16. Edward Gibbon popularised this story in chapter 31 of his *Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire* (1776-1789), and it was later extensively depicted in book imagery, famously in Heinrich Leutemann's engraving of Alaric's burial for Ridpath's *Universal History* (1895). More recently, Anselm Kiefer recreated this tradition in *Alarichs Grab* (1975), a painting dominated by grey tones portraying a mysterious landscape and river that suggest a dark legend rather than a historical event.

<sup>41</sup> The taking of Carthage is narrated among others by Procopius, *De Bello Vandalico* 1.3-8 and Jordanes, *Getica* 33.167-70. The revisionism of the Vandal Kingdom as a positive period finds its roots in the poets of the *Anthologia Latina*, which were compiled in Carthage around 530, and that attest among others the monuments built and reconstructed by the Vandal Kings, e.g. *AL* 210-215.

<sup>42</sup> Most notably, a painting by the Russian Karl Briullov, *Genseric sacking Rome* (1833-1836).

Attila also married Kriemhilda, the abandoned spouse of Siegfried, an inclusion intended to connect the reader/viewer to popular German traditions. The image of Attila as a wild, oriental ruler is in contrast to that of Flavius Aetius on another card in the set. Here we meet a key moment of the famous Battle of the Catalaunian Plains (451), when the Roman general joined Theodoric and the Visigoths against the Huns. The reverse text celebrates this moment as a victory of the West over the East. It also notes the exaggeration of the sources that narrated the episode, which calculated around 300,000 warriors to have fought in the battle.<sup>43</sup> Again, the German text adds a detail that is not included in other versions: a reference to the famous fresco on the battle (*Die Hunnenschlacht*) painted by Wilhelm von Kaulbach for the Neuer Museum in Berlin (1842-1865).<sup>44</sup> This gigantic painting, which belonged to an ambitious cycle of Universal History (Ebert 1987), recreated a legend that is also mentioned on the *Liebig* cards, according to which the ghosts of the fallen warriors continued fighting for three days.<sup>45</sup> The popularity and captivating mysticism of the fresco inspired Franz Liszt's symphonic poem of the same name (1857), which elevated the story to the pantheon of popular German traditions.

Odoacer, whose "barbarian" origins are not entirely clear, defied the Romans to become king of Italy in 476 with the support of the Eastern Emperor Zenon.<sup>46</sup> Another card in the series reminds that history books have labelled Odoacer as the protagonist of the end of the Western Roman Empire. The images of violence and decline that one might expect from such a transcendent episode instead give way to an idyllic, joyful countryside scene in which Odoacer's soldiers – both Germanic and Romans – proclaim him king. The back-text reinforces this depiction and mentions that Odoacer ruled with wisdom and justice until he was deposed and later treacherously killed by Theodoric. Despite this unfavourable introduction, Theodoric himself features triumphal on the next card. The epic scene takes place in the Alps in 489 and shows Theodoric leading the Ostrogoths – including women, children and old men – on their long and strenuous journey to Italy. The text again evokes the links

<sup>43</sup> The battle is famously recorded by chroniclers of the 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> centuries: e.g. Hydatius, *Chronicon* 150; Jordanes, *Getica* 36-42, 191-213; *Chronica Gallica* 139; Cassiodorus, *Chronica* 451; Procopius 1.4.24; John Malalas 359; Gregory of Tours 2.7.

<sup>44</sup> The fresco, which was destroyed during WWII, was the second version of a cartoon in oil dated to 1837, today preserved in the Staatsgalerie in Stuttgart.

<sup>45</sup> This legend was recorded in the 9<sup>th</sup> century by Photius, who follows the 6<sup>th</sup> century Neo-Platonist Damascius, *Vita Isidori* (*apud*. Phot.) 63.

<sup>46</sup> Jordanes, *Getica* 46. 243.

with the Nibelungen epic poem, in which Theodoric appears as Dietrich von Bern, and recalls his wise and energetic rule until his death in 626.

Overall, the *Völkerwanderung* series delineates a consistent narrative that challenges the traditional “fall of civilisation” views linked to the 5<sup>th</sup> century invasions. This re-interpretation proposes lines of continuity between Roman and Medieval history and the origins of modern nations through the stories and legends of the peoples that became protagonists of the huge migration waves and the disintegration of the Western Roman Empire. The didactical cards echo anecdotes and stories that were familiar to audiences (particularly in Germany) at the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. This particular series canvases the genesis of European nations as the outcome of not only violent conflicts, but also of the more peaceful processes of integration and cultural merger under the auspices of Christian religion.

### 5.2. *Portraits of Self and of the Other: Ethnicity, Archaeology and Colonialism*

The Migration Period was a theme that inevitably invited reflection on the origins and identity of Europe in a period of major geopolitical challenges that led to the creation and reaffirmation of modern national identities. If the “Barbarian Invasions” signified the past of Europe, its future awaited elsewhere.

Colonialism provided European nations with the opportunity to build a future of prosperity through territorial expansion. The mission of civilisation became an ideal strategy to legitimise the processes of conquest and submission of peoples that had inevitably been labelled as the “Barbarian Other”. From the imperialistic perspective of European Colonialism, Graeco-Roman Antiquity provided not only models to follow but also striking images of contrast between the memorable past and the declining present, particularly in the Near-Eastern and North-African territories that were annexed or conquered from the collapsing Ottoman Empire. This point of view served to fuel typical Western interpretations of the East (including Africa).<sup>47</sup>

A general look at the card series towards the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century shows a declining presence of Ancient myths, Homeric epics, Biblical and Early-Christian stories, which is in contrast to the increasing interest in historical and archaeological subjects, and in themes devoted to travelling, exotic geography, discoveries and adventures, Ethnography and Anthropology. Some of these cards are explicitly connected to European Colonialism and tend to celebrate the product as a successful

<sup>47</sup> As Edward Said notes, this idea is best exemplified in Chateaubriand’s romanticized view of the Orient as a “decrepit canvas” turned into a “savage state” (2003 (1978), 171-175).



voyager and “conqueror”, suggesting associations between Western consumerism and imperialism.<sup>48</sup>

The beginnings of the 20<sup>th</sup> century saw a growing interest in North Africa as a focus of attention on the *Liebig* cards. This trend was mirrored by the colonial ambitions and escalating tensions between the members of the still active Triple Alliance and the Triple Entente, on the one hand, and between European nations and a debilitated Ottoman Empire, on the other. Consider, for instance, a series from the year 1911 featuring picturesque scenes from Algeria, which was colonised by France in 1830.<sup>49</sup> One of the cards shows a local inhabitant in the foreground, while the impressive ruins of the Roman camp of Lambaesis (Lambessa on the caption) and the building commonly known as the *praetorium* occupy the background. This 3<sup>rd</sup> century building became a symbol of French domination and was excavated in 1848. A large body of popular imagery attest this fame.<sup>50</sup> The idea of the “nostalgic ruin” features thus the Ottoman cultural decadence versus the enlightening mission of civilisation embodied by the European nations.<sup>51</sup>

The Italo-Turkish War (1911-1912) was a direct consequence of this territorial competition, and created an opportunity for the flourishing Italian nation to accomplish its colonial dream of the *mare nostrum* (Giardina & Vauchez 2000, 193-199). France’s expansion into Morocco in 1911 and Italy’s determination to compensate for the loss of its former influence over Tunisia (a French protectorate since 1881) both led to the Italian invasions and conquests of Tripolitania and Cyrenaica.<sup>52</sup> In 1912, a card set triumphantly records Italy’s victory over the Ottomans (n. 1046). The First World War caused logical disruptions and crises in distributing the *Liebig*

<sup>48</sup> E.g. n.304 (1891) shows a Western trader and his interactions with African communities. The protagonist of the vignettes is the Liebig flask itself, portrayed as a gift (in huge size) successfully exchanged against local items / tokens (including ivory). The last image shows the African tribe welcoming the Liebig Meat Extract with a ritual dance, a clear allegory for the prosperity coming from the West. For the link between Western products and imperialism, see Salmi 2008, 97. The colonies of the European nations are explicitly celebrated in several card sets printed within the first decade of the 20<sup>th</sup> century.

<sup>49</sup> N. 1012. See also n. 1905 (1910), which shows scenes from Egypt.

<sup>50</sup> E.g. a painting by Emmanuel-Joseph Lauret (c. 1853) and a book-engraving by Armand Kohl (c. 1890).

<sup>51</sup> A card series (n. 695, 1902) illustrated the ruins of Persepolis, Thebes, Pompeii, Ephesus, Baalbek, as well as an indigenous town in Colorado.

<sup>52</sup> Italy also occupied the islands of the Dodecanese, but they were returned to the Ottoman Empire after the War.

*Meat Extract*, so only a few new series were printed between 1914 and 1920.<sup>53</sup> One of these sets showed picturesque images and customs of people in Tunisia (n. 1105); another focuses specifically on Roman ruins in North Africa (n. 1106). It is worth taking a closer look at the latter (Fig. 2). All vignettes are characterised by an aesthetic contrast between the imposing Roman ruins and the scenes of everyday life that surround them: the past and the present, the former labelled by its ancient glory, the latter by a certain archaism and the exotic ethnographic views typical of Orientalism.

The first card in the set depicts the huge Amphitheatre of El-Djem (the ancient Thysdrus) in Tunisia, built by Gordian III in AD 238. The text on the back reminds the reader of its impressive size, almost equivalent to Rome's Colosseum, but also emphasises its current state of ruin provoked by the continuous reuse of materials by indigenous inhabitants. Reuse is also the theme of the second card, which shows the triumphal Arch of Marcus Aurelius in Tripoli, actually dedicated to Lucius Verus in AD 165. The image presents an arch completely reshaped as a building covered by walls, doors and windows. Its transformation during the Ottoman period is mentioned on the back-text. The recreation of this arch by the lithograph's artist seems to have followed contemporary popular photographs and illustrations that showed only partial views of the still covered building, which in reality had a quadrifrons structure.<sup>54</sup> This artistic license ought to emphasise its recycling as a shop and later a tavern, in clear contrast to its original function. The building later became one of the icons of the Italian domination of Libya, and accordingly was fully excavated and restored in the 1930s (Munzi 2004). On the next card, Berber travellers on dromedaries pass by a series of Roman tombs that flank the roads near Tolmeita (ancient Ptolemais), also in Libya. Again, the text evokes the once splendid Roman harbour-city, later condemned to oblivion and decline. A Roman aqueduct and the famous Acropolis of Byrsa illustrate the card devoted to the ruins of Carthage. The caption recalls the architectonic and engineering marvels of the Punic city and its Roman reconstruction. The protagonist of the following card is Timgad

<sup>53</sup> After the War, editions of the cards for the French market vanished definitively, while cards in French were printed for the Belgian and Swiss market.

<sup>54</sup> A postcard of 1909 entitled «Tripoli de Barbarie» shows the side of the arch covered by a façade with door and windows. This photograph was the basis for an aquatint postcard signed by A. Rossi, which adds Italian soldiers in front of the building. Also popular were the postcards that reproduced works of the painter Giovanni Rava, who accompanied the Italian troops in Libya in 1911. The wide distribution of these postcards was part of the imperialistic propaganda set in motion during and after the War. They presented the “occupied” Roman buildings as symbols of the mission of civilisation of the Italian invasion.



Fig. 3.  
*Vestigia di civiltà scomparse*, 1922-1923.  
Liebig Sanguinetti cat. 12 n. 1152.

(ancient Thamugadi), the spectacular ruins of which are compared with those of Pompeii on the text. Again, the accent is upon the huge territorial extension of the Roman Empire. The ruins of the Greek (later Roman) city of Cyrene, capital of Cyrenaica, close the series. The illustration displays the ruins of a two-storey circular building, the walls of which serve as support for a modest cottage made of reeds used by the local inhabitants. The text evokes the founding of the city by Greeks from Thera in the 7<sup>th</sup> century BC, as well as its long prosperity under Roman rule. We are also reminded that Cyrene's decline was provoked by the repeated nomadic incursions and negligence of the Turkish domination that brought the town into ruins. A reference to the present is added at the end of the text: the annexing of Cyrenaica to Italy in 1911. This important detail marks a turning point in the discourse of decadence attached to the Ottoman Empire, for it announces a new era of civilisation guided by the "new Rome". The rise of Fascism in Italy after WWI reinforced this idea.<sup>55</sup>

The *Liebig Company*, fully established in Europe from the 1920s, adapted its strategies to the new geopolitical challenges and interests of the nations that became established as the principal consumers after WWI: Italy, Germany and Belgium. *Liebig* dedicated several card series during these years to geographical, archaeological and historical themes that underlined the ascendancy of imperial and colonial discourses.<sup>56</sup> One of them (n. 1152), dated to 1922/3, focuses on great archaeological discoveries and their contribution to the history of civilisations (Fig. 3). The archaeological expedition of Napoleon in Egypt and the excavation of the Pyramid of Chefred; the exploration of the Incan ruins of Lake Titicaca by Alexander von Humboldt; and the German excavations of the funerary temple of the King Sahura in Abusir (Egypt) at the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century all signified the Western discourse that explicitly linked a passion for archaeology and past civilisations with modern imperialism. One of the cards illustrates the discovery of flint axes and Etruscan vases in Denmark. The reverse text discusses the theory that material culture indicates the level of development of a civilisation, noting that discoveries demonstrate that peoples from the North displayed less progress than those from the South when comparing their artistic output. In Denmark and Sweden, states the card, objects of bronze and

<sup>55</sup> On Rome as a political model for modern colonialism see Hingley 2006.

<sup>56</sup> Among the first: monuments from Ancient Sicily (n. 1129, 1921); Roman Campagna (n. 1136, 1922/23). In the years 1922/23 *Liebig* printed a card series on modern Eastern Africa (n. 1132), episodes of the Eastern Roman Empire (n. 1138), on founders of modern nations (n. 1139), and on the origins of colonies (n. 1146).

iron were found, but it is commonly accepted that these items were largely imported from Romans, Etruscans and Phoenicians. The remaining two cards deal with Italian discoveries, and the Italian text adds some specific details not included in other editions. The card focusing on Pompeii highlights the contribution of the Italian government in excavating the Vesuvian city and the conservation of precious art objects in the local museum. Overall, this card series clearly followed a fashionable interest in spectacular archaeology at the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, but it also met contemporary agendas that linked archaeological heritage and colonial pretensions.<sup>57</sup>

The imperialistic discourse escalated in the following years, but it was not until the 1930s that it issued the explicit propaganda of Fascism and Nazism.<sup>58</sup> In 1937, an unusual set of eighteen *Liebig* cards edited only in Italy celebrated the new Italian Empire, *Africa Orientale Italiana*, proclaimed by Mussolini in May 1936 after the conquest of Ethiopia.<sup>59</sup> The series shows picturesque costumes, monuments and landscapes across Abyssinia, including the ruins of a Christian basilica from the ancient kingdom of Axum. A reference to the impressively decorated rectangular obelisks from Axum alludes to the ancient splendour of this civilisation. The text surely reminded readers of the famous transport of a granite obelisk from Axum to Rome in the same year, 1937. Considered a spoil of war and a symbol of the Italian Empire, the obelisk stood in the Porta Capena, between the Circus Maximus and the (by then) seat of the Ministero delle Colonie, until it was returned to Ethiopia in 2005. Following similar initiatives to those taken by Roman Emperors, the Fascist regime intended to demonstrate that, like the ancient Romans, modern Italians were capable of similarly gigantic logistic and engineering enterprises. The contribution of the Italian conquerors to Abyssinia's prosperity is particularly emphasised on a card labelled as *Strade romane*, which shows locals and Italians working together to construct roads, clearly alluding to the Italian conquerors as the legitimate heirs of ancient Romans. The interest in Roman condottieri emulated by Mussolini crystallised in a card series devoted to Julius Caesar (n. 1378, 1938), Augustus (n. 1391, 1939) and Scipio Africanus (n. 1406, 1939).<sup>60</sup> In the case of the latter, the lithographs seem to have been inspired by the propaganda film *Scipione l'Africano*

<sup>57</sup> In 1925, *Liebig* edited a whole card set dedicated to the burial of Tutankhamen, whose tomb had famously been discovered in 1922 by Howard Carter (n. 1173).

<sup>58</sup> Among the cards edited in Germany only, *Liebig* published two series on the *Hitlerjugend* (Hitler Youth) organisation (n. 1300-1, 1934).

<sup>59</sup> Abyssinia was added to Eritrea and parts of Somalia, already under Italian power.

<sup>60</sup> To be added to this trend is the card set n. 1395 (1939), devoted to Italian condottieri.

(C. Gallone, 1937), which delineated a clear association between Scipio and Mussolini, and between the Roman victories against Carthage and the Italian territorial expansion into Africa during the 20<sup>th</sup> century (Wyke 1997, 21-22).

With the exception of Belgium, which continued to produce cards on colonial Congo during and after the War, the theme of imperialism associated with modern nations vanished from the *Liebig* series during the 1940s and 1950s. Greek History and Early Christianity overtook Roman history as protagonists,<sup>61</sup> new characters such as the unprecedented Cicero and Virgil replaced the glory of rulers and conquerors,<sup>62</sup> while topics linked with everyday life and the history of knowledge and culture made their *réentrée* into the series.<sup>63</sup> The Italian Empire had vanished, and in its place a renewed interest in regional archaeology and heritage emerged: the Roman and Italian glories recalled by Carthage and Cyrene now gave way to the less biased picturesque canvases of ancient Italic Peoples and Old Latium.<sup>64</sup>

## 6. CONCLUSIONS

The triple “revolution” – nutritional, marketing, educational – has attempted to explain the unprecedented global success of a product that announced a new era of health and prosperity and that built considerable prestige as a commodity associated with knowledge. As “food” for the intellect, the *Liebig* cards can indeed be considered a “collectable global encyclopaedia” that impacted the domestic sphere and everyday life of socially diverse consumers. Their cultural influence can effectively be compared to that of popular history books, but also of other popular media and expressions of folklore that function as persuasive mechanisms of identity-shaping. The considerable weight of the Ancient World within the cards can be partially explained by an interest in tracing the long timelines of the history of humanity, culture and science from a Western perspective. However, the marketing

<sup>61</sup> E.g. the series dedicated to Socrates (n. 1484, 1949); Alexander (n. 1487, 1950), the Sicilian Expedition of the 10.000 (n. 1505, 1950); the Minoan Civilisation (n.1566, 1953); Saint Ambrose (n. 1611, 1954).

<sup>62</sup> Cicero (n. 1754, 1961); Virgil (1581, 1953).

<sup>63</sup> N. 1466 (1948) on the daily life of a wealthy Roman; n. 1501 (1950), on bread, wine and oil in Ancient Rome; n. 1696 (1958), on saviours of the Ancient World.

<sup>64</sup> Albans and Volsci (n. 1501, 1951); Picturesque Latium (n. 1595c, 1954); beauties of Ancient Rome (n. 1662, 1957); the Etruscans (n. 1801, 1963).

of the company also showed from the very beginning a particular care for creating series that linked the product with specific national agendas. The nation and its past emerged on the cards as a powerful, marketable idea that also demanded differentiated strategies of communication in order to meet the distinctive sensibilities and ideologies of the countries in which the products were distributed. The revisionism of the Barbarians and the Migration Period, as well as the connections made between Roman Imperialism and European Colonialism, are two significant examples of the compelling way *Liebig* managed to reconnect consumers and collectors with a collective sense of belonging and a national identity. As an educative instrument that combined images with text, the cards not only contributed to fixing and transmitting traditions, they also served to legitimise lines of continuity between past and present, and between the mythical, legendary and historical roots of modern nations that, like the *Liebig* company, were successfully projected as enduring and unbeatable brands.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Adorno, T., 1991 (1944), «The Schema of Mass Culture», in *The culture Industry. Selected Essays on Mass Culture*, London – New York: Routledge, 53-84.
- Amalvi, Ch., 1984, «De Vercingétorix à Astérix, de la Gaule à De Gaulle, ou les métamorphoses idéologiques et culturelles de nos origines nationales», *Dialogues d'histoire ancienne* 10.1, 285-318.
- Anderson, B., 2006 (1983), *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism*, London – New York: Verso.
- Aronczyk, M., 2013, *Branding the Nation. The Global Business of National Identity*, Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Barthes, R., 1963, «Le message publicitaire, rêve et poésie», *Les Cahiers de la publicité 7 (Langue et publicité)*, 91-96.
- Benjamin, W., 2008 (1936), *The Work of Art in the Age of Mechanical Reproduction*, London: Penguin.
- Burrow, J. W., 2000, *The Crisis of Reason. European Thought, 1848-1914*, New Haven and London.
- Cottin, J., 2001, «Le sacré dans la publicité», *Autres temps. Cahiers d'éthique sociale et politique* 69, 83-93.
- Cronin, A., 2004, *Advertising Myths: The Strange Half Lives of Images and Commodities*, London: Routledge.
- Demougeot, É., 1988, «À propos des interprétations de la chute de Rome et du déclin de l'Empire Romain», *Revue des Études Anciennes* 90/3-4, 423-435.
- Dietler, M., 1994, «'Our Ancestors the Gauls': Archaeology, Ethnic Nationalism, and the Manipulation of Celtic Identity in Modern Europe», *American Anthropologist* 96.3, 584-605.
- Ebert, H., 1987, «Über die Entstehung, Bewertung und Zerstörung der Wandgemälde Wilhelm von Kaulbachs im Treppenhaus des Neuen Museums zu Berlin. Ein Dokumentarbericht», *Forschungen und Berichte* 26, 177-204.
- Finlay, M., 1995, «Early marketing of the Theory of Nutrition: the Science and Culture of Liebig's Extract of Meat», in Kamminga, H.; Cunningham, A. (eds.), *The Science and Culture of Nutrition, 1840-1940 (Clio Medica 32)*, Amsterdam – Atlanta: Brill – Rodopi, 48-74.
- Giardina, A.; Vauchez, A., 2000, *Il mito di Roma: Da Carlo Magno a Mussolini*, Roma – Bari: Laterza
- Hamilakis, Y., 2000, «No laughing matter: antiquity in Greek political cartoons», *Public Archaeology* 1, 57-72.



- Hazel Hahn, H., 2006, «Du flâneur au consommateur: spectacle et consommation sur les Grands Boulevards, 1840-1914», *Romantisme* 134 (*Les Grands boulevards*), 67-78.
- Hingley, R., 2006, «Projecting empire», *Journal of Social Archaeology* 6/3, 328-353.
- Judel, G., 2003, «Die Geschichte von Liebig's Fleischextrakt. Zur populärste Erfindung des berühmten Chemikers», *Spiegel der Forschung* 1, 6-17.
- Kaelble, H., 1984, «Eras of Social Mobility in 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> Century Europe», *Journal of Social History* 17.3, 489-504.
- Kamminga, H., 1995, «Nutrition for the People, or the Fate of Jacob Moleschott's Contest for a Humanist Science», in Kamminga, H; Cunningham, A. (eds.), *The Science and Culture of Nutrition, 1840-1940 (Clio Medica 32)*, Amsterdam – Atlanta: Brill – Rodopi, 15-47.
- Kühschelm, O., Eder, F., Siegrist, H. (eds.), 2012, *Konsum und Nation. Zur Geschichte nationalisierender Inszenierungen in der Produktkommunikation*, Bielefeld: Transcript.
- Lindner, M., 2015, «Barbaricum – Civilisation of Savages», in García Morcillo, M.; Hanesworth, P.; Lapeña Marchena, O. (eds.), *Imagining Ancient Cities in Film: From Babylon to Cinecittà*, New York and London: Routledge, 227-254.
- MacRury, I., 2009, *Advertising*, London and New York: Routledge.
- McFall, L., 2004, *Advertising, A cultural economy*, London: Sage.
- Mitchell, T., 1989, «The World as Exhibition», *Comparative Studies in Society and History* 31/2, 217-236.
- Munzi, M., 2004, «Italian archaeology in Libya: From colonial romanità to decolonization of the past», in Galaty, M.; Watkinson, C. (eds.), *Archaeology under Dictatorship*, New York: Springer, 73-108.
- Noland, C., 1999, *Poetry at Stake. Lyric Aesthetics and the Challenge of Technology*, Princeton: Princeton University Press.
- Said, E. W., 2003 (1978), *Orientalism*, London, Penguin.
- Salmi, H., 2008, *Nineteenth-Century Europe. A Cultural History*, Cambridge – Malden: Wiley.
- Sauvageot, A., 1987, *Figures de la publicité, figures du monde*, Paris: Presses Universitaires de France.
- Schlange-Schöningen, H., 2009, «Eine der sympathischsten Heldengestalten der germanischen Urzeit: Alarich und der Fall Roms in der deutsch-französischen Wissenschaftsgeschichte», *Magazin forschung* 1, 39-46.
- Swinburne, L., 1996, «Von Liebig Condensed», in Walker, H. (ed.), *Cooks & Other People: Proceedings of the Oxford Symposium on Food and Cookery*, Oxford: Totness, 247-258.
- Talalay, L., 2004, «The past as commodity. Archaeological Images in modern advertising», *Public Archaeology* 3, 205-216.
- Ueffing, R., 2009, «Vercingetorix und das „freie Gallien“ – Frankreich als Nation und territoriale Einheit», in Krüger, C.; Lindner, M. (eds.), *Nationalismus und Antikenrezeption*, Oldenburg: Carl von Ossietzky Universität, 43-56.

MARTA GARCÍA MORCILLO

Woolf, S., 1996, «Introduction», in *Nationalism in Europe, 1815 to the Present. A Reader*, London – New York: Psychology Press, 1-39.

Wyke, M., 1997, *Projecting the Past. Ancient Rome, Cinema and History*, New York: Tylor & Francis.

La utilización del pasado en la construcción de los discursos identitarios nacionales resulta un fenómeno omnipresente en la modernidad occidental. La formación de identidades colectivas y, en particular, aquellas que se conforman alrededor de la nación, han recurrido al pasado como uno de los resortes principales que permiten reconocerse como miembro de una comunidad dada. La apelación a una serie de episodios, personajes o momentos del pasado, que se articulan en una línea de continuidad con el presente, constituye una referencia política, cultural y sentimental para los miembros de la comunidad. Esas referencias se ordenan, codifican y difunden a través de diferentes mecanismos, desde el sistema educativo reglado hasta la propaganda política u otros mecanismos de transmisión cultural, como la pintura histórica o los monumentos conmemorativos.



Ediciones Lolifemo

ISBN: 978-84-16335-47-3



9 788416 335473

