

Two dead Cities

“the poetic image is never submitted to an impulse, it is never the echo of a past time, but rather the contrary; through a striking image, the distant past time echoes and it is impossible to catch on which depth such echoes will have its repercussion and spread.”

Gaston Bachelard, “The poetry of space”



I have contrasting feelings each time I visit archaeological sites that because of their double nature are at the same time places of death and places of amusement, where the emotional reality mingles with the objective fiction of the historical reconstruction.

In the beauty of the archaeological areas, I perceive the weight of a catastrophe, of a historical split. In the archaeological sites of Etruria, in particular, these sensations are emphasized, as the pre-Latin Etruscan civilization lets emerge an archaic vision of itself.

In Vulci, an Etruscan city, not only its urban structure has been destroyed, but also the population that founded and lived in it has completely disappeared, turning it into a “dead city”.

In this place, a further element of complexity is to be added. The works in the area, which have been realized for tourism purposes, draw the area once again as if it were the foundation act of a new, interrupted structure, which will never be built, nor inhabited.

The two “dead cities” are stratified one on the top of the other: Vulci, thanks to the excavation works, is emerging, whereas the new “dead city” is hopelessly sinking. The two layers sliding on one another are the image of time’s materialization, and the present moment coincides with the point of emergence-immersion of the two “cities”.

This photographic work inquires the place of these visions, findings, of “dead towns” that are continuously changing, archaic signs of new and ancient rites linked to the appropriation of places, metaphorical images that exist beyond the historical time, but take their roots in the space of imagination and in dream.