Questions de communication

22 | 2012
Patrimonialiser les musiques populaires et actuelles

The Spectre haunting Rock Music – The Obsession with Heritage, Popular and Present-Day Music, and "Museo-mummification" Issues

Philippe Le Guern

Translator: Inist

This text was automatically generated on 1 May 2019.

The Spectre haunting Rock Music – The Obsession with Heritage, Popular and Present-Day Music, and "Museo-mummification" Issues

Philippe Le Guern

Translation : Inist

EDITOR'S NOTE

This English translation has not been published in printed form/Cette traduction anglaise n'a pas été publiée sous forme imprimée.

A ghost story

1   This entire story takes root with the Beatles, first in Paris and subsequently in Liverpool, before spreading out to Laval (Mayenne département of France) and to many other places. We start with the Beatles museum in Paris, or rather with John Lennon at the *Cité de la Musique* from October 2005 to June 2006 – John Lennon's ghost and his fetish objects. I strolled through the exhibition with some sociologist friends (Dominique Pasquier, Patrick Mignon, Marc Touché and Hervé Glevarec), but we were more like fans than sociologists for the moment. With Marc Touché, we entered what purported to be the reconstitution of a typical teenager's room in the late Fifties. The wallpaper, furniture, posters, and sound track were all of the right vintage – everything matched up, except for one detail: the music was being played on a stereo sound system with loudspeakers. We then embarked on a long conversation with Marc Touché on the careful attention to be paid to material cultures in exhibitions of this kind: the hi-fi system was not a problem

because it was anachronistic; rather, it did not make it possible to understand or even imagine the sound experience of listening to a Teppaz or any other record-player of the time, with its almost total lack of bass, a sound that seems to us today to be very nasal, listening to sound in mono, the close link between this type of equipment and the bedroom or private party as places for listening and socialising, etc. Then, in September 2011, back in the footsteps of the Beatles, the group that has haunted me since childhood. I was invited to speak at Liverpool University. I took advantage of the occasion to walk around the town, as it was my first visit. Museums devoted to the Beatles had sprung up almost like mushrooms along the docks. Together with emeritus musicologist Philip Tagg, I decided to take a ride in one of the many taxis offering tourists a motorised pilgrimage in the footsteps of the most famous group of the town, the United Kingdom, and the whole world. The driver-cum-guide, with his hard-core skinhead look, really went to town for us, offering a route that would have found favour with historian Carlo Ginzburg, with his evidential paradigm. We embarked on nothing short of a hermeneutic – and often frankly erudite – race, including barber's shops and Penny Lane, chapels and Father McKenzie. The dominant note, however, was the disturbing feeling that never quite went away, despite the traces, signs, clues and symptoms of variable kinds: from the interpretation of an inscription on a gravestone that echoed the coded lyrics of songs to an official plaque authenticating the house where John Lennon grew up – it was difficult to tell for sure whether the reference was to something that had actually existed or merely to an artefact. Our taxi stopped in front of a wrought iron gate behind which stretched some kind of wasteland. The driver invited me to get out of the taxi and showed me what he thought was the best place for taking a photograph. We took it in turns – I had to wait while other pilgrim tourists got out of taxis owned by the same company to take *the* photo. What I was looking at was Strawberry Field, and I was torn between the emotion of the moment and the impression that I was taking part in a masquerade: am I really standing where the Beatles really once stood, or in a place given importance subsequently, drawn out of the imaginary world of the Fab Four? Was this the Liverpool of the Beatles, or the Liverpool of their imagination?

2 Back in France, without the Beatles, but this time with the ghost of the Shadows: I attended the opening of the "Rock in Laval" exhibition. Laval, in the Mayenne *département*, is a town of 110 000 inhabitants, and has both the image of a rural community and a rich history of rock music. Walls of wooden planks inset with lit windows – instead of votive tablets there were keyboards, guitars, photographs, posters. The exhibition included a reconstitution of both a teenager's bedroom and a rehearsal venue. One young visitor, visibly moved, recognised his father on a photograph of one of Laval's rock groups in the Sixties. It was a successful exhibition: a real lesson in local history. And yet it said nothing to the musician I was in the Eighties and Nineties. It seemed to me that it concealed a part of the truth, and that *my* truth was no less true that that experienced by other musicians. Organising a collection and setting up an exhibition always obeys a particular taxonomy, a type of narration, with effects of classification and exclusion: this is explained extremely well by Marc Touché in relation to the collections he has brought into the *Musée des Civilisations de l'Europe and de la Méditerranée* (MuCEM), focused on pioneering places, rehearsal venues, and particular families of instruments. But where does History start? Where does revisionism start? How can an exhibition state the multiplicity of experiences, particularly as they are experiences involving the senses and emotions, and not merely a reductionist machine where only those objects deemed exemplary or

emblematic (of what, in fact? of an era? of habits? of the dominant aesthetics?) would be exhibited and have the value of proof. That is precisely one of the reasons for Jacques Derrida (1995) linking the issue of archives and the *arkhè* to the Freudian thesis of censorship and repression. Furthermore, why is sound so often the poor relation, compared with material objects, in these exhibitions on rock music? A point that was in fact noted by the organisers of an exhibition in Karlsruhe:

> "Visual experience dominates in numerous exhibitions. Sound Art. Sound as a Medium of Art emphasizes auditory experience and transforms the visual experience. The visitor is thus provided with the opportunity to become acquainted with an entirely new sound cosmos, which neither radio, film nor the music industry has been able to establish to such an extent."[1]

Photograph 1. "Rock in Laval" exhibition (photograph: P. Le Guern, 2010).

Photograph 2. "Rock in Laval" exhibition (photograph: P. Le Guern, 2010).

The spectral nature of rock

3 May Karl Marx forgive me, but there could well be a spectre haunting rock music. The spectre of rock continues to haunt rock music itself, rather like an equivalent of what Simon Reynolds (2012) in a striking phrase called "the empire of retro" with regard to current pop music, and which even led him to beg for Kurt Cobain to be left to rest in peace at last, as it is so clear that the death-wish underlying the compulsion of retromania is the diametrical opposite of the life-force – and the enthusiasm for transgression – on which rock music has built up its legend and its power as a social contaminant.

4 Indeed since the early 2000s, the spectacular turning-in on itself of rock music seems to have become the major characteristic of a culture which values nostalgia, recycling and self-quotation (with much use being made of sampling), which multiplies the mausoleums dedicated to its own glory, and deposits in the crypt of the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame or in the Museu del Rock at the heart of Barcelona's *Las Arenas* cultural and commercial complex the ghosts of the Beatles or Elvis. Fetish objects – guitars, stage costumes, etc – are on display for fans to admire: this produces underground questioning of our relationship with merchandise (but why on earth should rock music be removed from Karl Marx's attention?) and the apparently paradoxical link between rock and capitalism.

5 In this respect, by emphasising the multiple phenomena of nostalgic auto-celebration that has been a feature of pop culture since the early 2000s, Simon Reynolds' book *Retromania* (published [in France] in 2012), seems to indicate that commemorative manifestations have become an intrinsic component part of both mass culture and the media industry. Whereas each decade has been defined by a dominant sound or musical

genre, the most recent period appears to be that of the tribute and the quotation reference, with many groups and artistes taking their sound signature from past eras, from Amy Winehouse and her album with its evocative title *Back to Black* to Oasis aping the Beatles. The omnipresence of a retromanic posture is perhaps expressed symptomatically in a series of forms turned towards the past: the celebration of the vintage aesthetic and the demand for authenticity, the return of the LP, and the fetishisation of the ideal object and the ideal sound, the re-formation of disbanded groups and the formation of successful tribute bands (Abba Mania, The Australian Pink Floyd, etc), and the exhumation and commercialisation of posthumous recordings.

6   In this context of apparent exhaustion of avant-garde rock, a number of questions are raised. Firstly, is rock already a dead or stagnant genre, a sort of supernova that has long since cooled, whose current spectators make out no more than the image sent back to them through the space-time continuum? Or in other less lyrical words, can rock music escape the usual interrogations on the purpose of art? Then, how should we interpret the obsession with heritage which seems to be a feature of our current relationship with rock music? What anthropological significance should we give to a phenomenon which takes the form of a real frenzy of archive and museum work, a frenzy which cannot be dissociated from the contributions made by the Internet and the social networks to the constitution of an increasingly shrivelled digital memory of rock culture? Lastly, is nostalgia a positive factor in the establishment of the History (or the histories) of rock music? Let us consider that History is that particularly complex thing made up not only of strictly "periodisable" events and the relationships between achievements, but also of feelings and the specific – and occasionally contradictory – points of view of major characters and anonymous stakeholders. If that is so, how is the history of rock – in itself already an immense expanse of legends, not as the result of a lack of truth but because rock music is perhaps constitutionally a machine for producing fetishes – able to deal with retromanic compulsion when this tends to lend more credibility to the mythicised story of baby-boomers discovering rock music or periods that are deemed emblematic, such as the emergence of the punk movement? Conversely, is the same retromanic compulsion flattening this History under the weight of all the vernacular documents being put on-line today by countless rock fans?

7   Thus the central question that this issue of *Questions de Communication* intends to explore is "What significance should be given to what appears to be a phenomenon that is unparalleled in terms of its scale and the multiplicity of forms and arrangements it inspires[2], which I shall call an obsession with heritage?" Is this *obsession* the symptom of anthropological mutations, calling into question our conceptions of modernity, art, and the values for which art is a vehicle (authenticity, autonomy, etc), and digital culture (Kirby, 2009; Le Guern, 2012)? More specifically, the question that interests us here refers to different and interacting levels of analysis:

1. What do we consider "the rock heritage" to be, or what do we include in it? And indeed who is the "we" capable of or authorised to define and transmit that heritage? Fans? Public authorities? Experts in cultural history or museography?

2. What arrangements do we use when we stage this memory of rock culture?

3. Consequently, what history/histories of rock music do we compile on the basis of the traces, clues and emblems that we collect and select?

4. Lastly, is there an idiosyncratic way of producing this history of rock? In other words, are the history of rock and its patrimonialisation the same when seen from France, England, the United States, or elsewhere?

8 Turning something into a heritage feature involves, to apparently varying degrees, the three moments constituted by the identification of traces, their conservation and, lastly, their exploitation, generally by their presentation, making them visible using various expographic resources or strategies (Poli, 2003; Drouguet, 2005). The memory element – the *trace* as thought of by Jacques Derrida (1995), Paul Ricoeur (2000) and Carlo Ginzburg (1989) – does not in itself impose its significance: it remains dependent on a quantity of hermeneutic work, and this hermeneutic runs through each of these moments. In other words, and using the notion of *translation* adopted by Madeleine Akrich, Michel Callon and Bruno Latour (2000), there is no radical break between the thing itself and the discourse about that thing, but a process of elaboration by means of successive determinations, without any semiotic (or semantic) break. Furthermore, Jacques Derrida (1995: 37) stresses that "we no longer experience in the same way things that are no longer archived in the same way. The archivable meaning allows itself to be co-determined in advance by the archiving structure".

9 This issue therefore intends to investigate the policy of memory. By using the expression "policy of memory" we refer to what Michel Foucault (1969) identified as a mechanism of control and domination in respect of archives, which Victoria H. F. Scott (2008) – quoting Hayden White and Dominick LaCapra – depicted as the questioning of the "naturalised authority of archives", or again what Jacques Derrida (1995) associates with the question of archontic behaviour, i.e. the power to keep and interpret an archive, with the two-fold significance of the *arkhè* as a beginning and as an instruction. This questioning of memory as a policy, however, also opens up a train of thought on the impulse to archive things, this "archive disease" described by Derrida, the complexity of which is so well rendered in the English phrase "archive fever", in its morbid and nostalgic sense: i.e. the compulsion to endlessly accumulate the traces of an origin which is constantly slipping away and questions us on the risk of what Simon Reynolds (2012) calls "anarchive" or archive anarchy – its saturation power. On the one hand, then, there is the intuition, guided by a survival reflex, that "history must have a dustbin, or History will *be* a dustbin, a gigantic, sprawling garbage heap" (Reynolds, 2012: 63). On the other hand, there is the feeling that "old smelly cheeses" (to use an objection addressed to Marc Touché when he began his project on collections involving electro-amplified music at the French national museum of popular arts and traditions in Paris), ought to find favour in the eyes of the archons.

Turning rock music into part of the heritage – the ultimate legitimisation, or museo-mummification?

"After jazz (particularly Miles Davis), then Serge Gainsbourg, it was John Lennon and now it is the turn of Bob Dylan. So it has now happened – rock has now been put in a museum, and I am not sure it will do it much good. Very serious people will now display Gainsbourg's cigarette lighter or Zim's hat in the same way as they previously handled the works of Titian and Goya. On inauguration days, canapés and champagne in hand, curators are being congratulated by ministers on a spree. Back in their official car, who knows if a reefer or a line of coke might appear, or if a member of the government might join in the chorus of "*everybody must get stoned*

"?! Will France's First Lady, known to be a keen singer, take hubby Nicolas and their mate Johnny with her to visit the exhibition? My daughter Agathe (pronounced "I got" as in "I got *the blues*", of course!) was entitled to a visit with her class from school, and when she came back she said she had been delighted. Even so, I'm not so sure. I believed it when she asked me if I had the Stones' *You Can't Always Get What You Want*, but that was only because she had heard it during the film LOL (Laughing Out Loud)!" (Le Club des Mangeurs de Disques, 2012).

"At the exhibition in Rome early in the year, Éric de Chassey questioned the Le Monde newspaper, 'Is the real provocation today not putting these works in an institution, a non-commercial setting?' The suggestion does not seem to convince the person who burst onto the Geneva music scene with some other punks with first The Bastards and then Zero Heroes. 'This exhibition is absolute, total exploitation. Nevertheless, it's very moving to be able to dive back into the period again,' said the grey-haired sixty-year-old. There are rows of Sex Pistols posters and LP sleeves (Never Mind the Bollocks, Anarchy in the UK, God Save The Queen, Holidays in the Sun) designed by Britain's Jamie Reid – an anarcho-situationist graphic artist who determined the punk aesthetic – the shirts and T-shirts produced by English designer Vivienne Westwood and the Sex Pistols' manager Malcolm McLaren [...].

In fact, the interest of this visual and silent evocation of the roar of punk lies in its showing a number of filiations with the artistic avant-garde of the 20th century and the desire to sweep away the aesthetic and cultural traditions of previous eras. The fact remains that these cultured references were not necessarily present in the minds of the many groups and fans of this type of music, performed without a safety net." (Burnand, 2011)

"A strange fetishist cult has taken up residence in the past ten days at the Villa Medici in Rome. On the heights of Mount Pincio, within the walls of the sumptuous white palace, where the French Academy has its Italian home, visitors will be able as never before to measure the gulf separating the pomp of the place and the nature of the exhibition on display there. The amazing Renaissance rooms present row upon row of the objects and images generated by punk culture during its brief existence, between 1976 and 1980. The inventory of the objects brought together is extensive: clothes, fanzines, posters, flyers, drawings and collages, and record sleeves epitomising the era. And to accompany it all, there are also films and documentaries, adding elements that are essential to an understanding of this movement, which originated in England. With Europunk – the name of the exhibition – the curator and Director of the French Academy in Rome, Éric de Chassey, in collaboration with Fabrice Stroun, an independent curator associated with Mamco, has created a sort of necropolis. We will be able to visit it in Geneva in June. It will be possible to ask questions and perhaps dissipate the perplexity generated from a distance by this operation to collect fetish objects. Since, seen from the northern side of the Alps, Europunk definitely evokes thoughts of a vain celebration of objects – gadgets, even – devised by people with the business acumen of the likes of Malcolm McLaren (creator, manager and *deus ex machina* of the Sex Pistols) and Jamie Reid, originator of the image of the Queen covered in the words of the National Anthem. What status should be accorded to these obsessive relics of a counter-culture? Are they works of art? Or do they merely constitute scum documenting a destructive movement? The question has been dividing opinion for the past four decades. We will tend towards the second posit. The Villa Medici at any event has decided to turn it into museum material. In doing so, it confers on these historical relics which the people involved at the time – the Sex Pistols, France's Bazooka and the groups from Germany, the Netherlands, Switzerland and elsewhere on the exhibition's poster – were far from advocating. Punk swept away the past, everyone said in the Seventies. But above all, more radically and disturbingly, it wiped all hope off the map, with its famous "*No future*" slogan. Thirty years on, the future of the movement is still there, prolonged artificially by a

somewhat strident fetishist cult following. Continued in this way, and to some extent betrayed also, the movement is now at last able to bury another of its famous slogans: "*Punk not dead*". Punk is dead; it died on a hill in the Eternal City." (Zacheo, 2011)

10 What these three comments on exhibitions devoted to rock music tell us is that the increasing museification of rock music does not appear to be self-evident (Malfettes, 2012). It is all as if, at first sight, the exhibition were contributing to a subversion of the essence of rock by bringing it into a museum, by museo-mummifying once of the most emblematic (counter-cultural) expressions of contemporary history, constructed ideologically as resisting the embalming process by the institution: essentially just another variation on the conflict between Eros and Thanatos. Thus, according to Simon Reynolds, there are at least two arguments against a rapprochement between pop and museums: firstly, the fact that it is difficult for sound, unlike images, to find its place in such a venue[3], and secondly, the fact that a museum is fundamentally "opposed to the vital energies of pop and rock" (Reynolds, 2012: 39).

11 In fact each of the parties involved – the fans, the museum institutions – has something to say about it and is faced with its own paradoxes. Rock fans have the feeling that the object of their passion is being set in stone, whereas it is an object that still has a beating heart, and is still alive and well – or at the very least is not dead yet. Yet from another point of view, the exhibition offers a perfect opportunity for satisfying the fetishist impulse (Segré, 2003; Doss, 1999) that drives them. Herbert Haucke, an archetypal compulsive collector, tells us how he accumulated thousands of fetish objects which he then turned over to the Rockmuseum in Munich which, in turn, has put them on display:

"The camo outfit is from the Madonna clip that was banned but that everyone knows. The panties were used on a photo shoot with Britney Spears. They can't be washed, obviously, particularly as she signed them. I also have the guitar Janet Jackson used the day of the scandal incident, with Justin Timberlake."[4]

12 The paradox of the rock fan, which is also that of rock music and of rock in a museum, is encapsulated in these staged fetish items since, in the end, what is it that attracts us to these fetish objects and why do we feel the desire to look at them? Let us take a lesson out of the book of cultural history, the legitimation of rock music accompanying its inclusion in History but also attesting to the role it has been able to play in contemporary history. Let us look for the artefact which authenticates that *that* did indeed exist, the proof of the existence of rock and its origin. Otherwise, let us look for some of the original emotions which bound it to rock music when it burst into our lives. It seems to me that, basically, the rise in nostalgia for rock culture, conjugated with the merchandisation of the past, questions our sense of history and progress and the ideas we put into rock music, the quest for authenticity serving as a basis for an ambiguous project on the fantasy of a golden age. As Simon Frith has shown (1991), the industry has been able to cynically exploit the use of anti-commercial images to guarantee the 'authenticity' of the products they serve to sell, an example being the use of the Beatles' *Revolution* for a Nike advertising spot. As post-modern consumers of this recycled music, we are sooner or later confronted with the question of why we believe that rock was at one time a real movement, that our desires could have been unequivocal at that time (Frith, 1991: 249). It may be that the rock museums make us face the question of the complex connection between the paradoxical essence of rock (since, as Nik Cohn was to demonstrate early on, "pop" does not designate a radically distinct ontological or aesthetic reality, but rather the other name that designates the inevitable industrialisation of rock), our desires, and

the spirit of capitalism. As such, it is possible that rock as an ideal has long ceased to be anything more than the mythicised, economically rationalised and carefully maintained narrative of values that were originally linked to authenticity, purity and independence. And it is this type of original narrative that many rock museums today are attempting to stage. This is exactly what Greil Marcus meant (2001: 7), and his commentary stresses the essentialist paradox (or in fact the anti-essentialist paradox) of rock music:

> "True pop redefined the sublime as what occurs during an appearance, or during a disappearance – it redefined the sublime as a matter of the moment. Pop music was all about flamboyancy, glamour, excess – it invented itself and it destroyed itself. It made no references to anything else – or if it did, it lied and claimed that it didn't, and convinced itself that what it said was true. Pop is a story of ghosts: the ghost of the performer, the ghost of the fan, the fan who fantasises about the performer, the performer who fantasises about the fan; it involves accepting the fantasies at face value for as long as the whole thing lasts."

13   In addition, the fact that the essence of rock is the fantasy of the truth of the fantasy and that museums are faced with this paradoxical truth recalls another paradox of comparable form, that of post-modern American art since the mid-1970s. About which Arthur Danto (2000: 555) wrote that American artists have to face the problem of being Americans, and the need to do so is part of what makes them Americans. In the same way, rock music has to face the fact of being *also* a fantasy machine and that necessity is not a manufacturing defect but forms part of the very essence of rock music... From this point of view, it appears to be possible to claim that the problem is not so much that museums embalm rock and its life-force but rather that this life-force is at the heart of the fantasy that binds rock music and its fans together, and that, for the museum, the challenge is then to attempt not so much to stage the *truth* of rock as to render visible the fantasy-related structure that is the very essence of rock music and the reason for fans' passionate attachment to it. It is perhaps, however, a post-modern ideal – with all its potential for irony and distance – which museums are not prepared to take up.

14   Until now, all that has been mentioned is what disturbs fans in the supposed killing of rock. Yet for the stakeholders in the museum institutions there is no less of a paradox to be faced: on the one hand the institution – the case of the Villa Medici hosting an exhibition on the history of the punk movement is a good illustration – is in line with modern opinion and the renewal of its ambitions as a museum when it includes rock. In doing so it kills two birds with one stone since it appears clearly as the legitimating power – and thereby gives rise to a further paradox since by legitimising popular culture in this way by definition it takes away part of its popular nature: "It had to be censored to be studied" (Certeau, 1990: 45) – and by thereby going beyond the dialectic of retrograde conservatism and trendy superficiality it presents itself as the venue for the new cultural democratisation. But, involuntarily and perhaps unconsciously, by exhibiting the formerly vociferous and currently mummified and harmless Sex Pistols at no lesser place than the Villa Medici, how can we not think that the institution is indicating that it always has the last word? It seems that there is something at play here that cannot be reduced to a discourse on the intentions of the curators and other members of the institution, because this something is to do with denial and repression, connected with the complex, underground relationship which the institution as the expression of the power's unconscious engages in in relation to the very idea of what is "popular" and what popular cultures are. It is precisely this that is at play in the "beauty of death", "because we are incapable of talking about it without making it cease to exist" (Certeau, 1990: 60).

Michel de Certeau's hypothesis that the benevolent attitude of the institution to rock cultures and more generally to popular cultures, a benevolence similar to the kiss of death, questions the actual – repressed – origin of these institutions, constituted in and by the desire to "eliminate a threat from the people" (*ibid.*: 59), therefore remains open. I would add that for the moment I leave open the questions raised by these museums – which indeed frequently reject that label and choose other titles that are no doubt deemed less conservative – built specially to enhance the rock heritage and which cannot be confused with places such as the Villa Medici. Similarly, I shall not comment here on another important phenomenon, namely the multiplication of *profane* museums or collections to which the Internet is capable of giving structure and visibility, particularly by placing value on whole areas of vernacular culture, by spawning new types of commentaries and commitment via the social networks, and lastly by redefining the outlines of expertise and competence.

Rock culture and the heritage boom?

15 However, it remains to be understood why rock is apparently on the contemporary heritage agenda at present, and also whether, by its very nature, it produces epistemological changes in our way of thinking about the past and history. Rock[5] implies a definition of the *past* which may lead us to think that it is not actually in the past yet, that it has not yet been constituted as an "otherness"[6] authorising consideration. The problem may however be presented in a different way: does turning such objects into heritage items, when their contemporaneity places them in a timescale that belongs to a past that is not yet truly in the past, not call for a redefinition of temporality and its coherency with an advanced level of modernity in which communication tools and a feeling of acceleration are closely interrelated?

16 At first sight, it has to be admitted that talking of obsession with the heritage with regard to rock music seems to be over-emphatic: is it not more modestly a trompe-l'oeil effect induced by the public, mediatised success of a few brand-new museums – particularly the *Museu del Rock* in Barcelona – that are intended to accompany the movement to de-territorialise the cultural heritage in a globalised modernity? And yet the contemporary success of rock music as a vector of commemoration appears unquestionable, even if the forms of such commemoration are multiple: the creation of museums or exhibition venues; the re-forming of cult groups, often minus most of the original members and whose surviving members – sometimes now overweight and with thinning hair and at any event far distant from the glamorous image they used to project – do all they can to make a profit; the formation of tribute bands, built like formidable time machines capable of going "back to the future" in order to import the past into the present; re-releasing compilations, stock works by former performers, the authenticity of which is materially and symbolically guaranteed by the return to the LP, sometimes in luxurious colour editions at exorbitant cost, PVC oxymora of a modernity turned towards an economically rationalisable past[7], as attested by the recent marketing campaign by an auto-proclaimed leader of cultural agitation in France, sensitive to the commercial potential of the LP and the "vintage spirit"[8]; the multiplication of television programmes on the history of rock music, the emblematic series of which is *"Summer of ..."* (starting with *"the Sixties"* and running through *"the Seventies"*, *"the Eighties, "love"* and *"rebels"*), which has become the inevitable summertime potboiler on the Arte television channel.

17   In recent years, in terms of academic expertise and public or para-public discourse, we
      have seen a multiplication of initiatives witnessing to growing interest in the history of
      rock music and its heritage value: for example, a seminar on the history of rock which
      included a colloquy entitled *"This Is The Modern World: Pour une histoire sociale du rock"* [sic]
      attests the arrival of this topic and its gradual legitimation within the university
      institution, albeit a number of decades behind the English-language context (Dauncey, Le
      Guern, 2010). Whereas this history was previously investigated in no real order and
      remained a field led by a handful of pioneer researchers often working in isolation,
      including Bertrand Lemonnier and Jean-François Sirinelli, interest in rock music and its
      history may be seen as a new stage in the slow process of legitimation of the popular
      forms of culture. At the same time, however, an epistemology of the heritage activity
      connected with popular music forms only came into being [in France] very late and
      sporadically, whereas in the United Kingdom rock forms a significant part of *Heritage
      Studies* and *Memory Studies*. In this respect, Marc Touché's article (2007) published in his
      first issue of the review *Réseaux* devoted to the sociology of different types of popular
      music, by reflecting on the issues involving categories, institutions, etc connected with
      adopting a memory of rock culture, still today represents the most comprehensive
      attempt to describe, from the inside and in a quasi auto-ethnographical fashion, the
      singular experience of a museographical researcher, battling to impose "his" object in the
      world of institutions, simultaneously confronted – in a real face-off between the material
      power of the objects and that of the play of language – by the necessity of holding
      together the *thing in itself* (in the truly pragmatic sense of the term, Marc Touché
      demonstrates how an amplifier, a guitar, a microphone, etc are in fact distillations of
      uses, practices and significance) and the descriptive categories (which – as for example
      "contemporary music" – are always expressive not only of a desire to classify or order the
      world but also and perhaps above all of the expressive methods employed by that power:
      "shifters" that are as logical and ontological as they are agonistic).

18   But other players, outside academic circles and generally connected with public and para-
      public policies, have also made an appearance recently in the field, turning popular
      present-day music into a heritage item. Thus an increasing number of towns have been
      turning music into local history and making it an element with identity value, including
      the "Rock in Laval" exhibition held from November 2009 and February 2010, which
      probably constitutes a good example of the genre. Whereas a number of books had been
      written – often by erudite amateurs – on the local history of rock music in towns and
      areas such as Nantes, Bordeaux, Le Havre, Brittany, Normandy, etc, the celebration of this
      music in exhibitions supported by public authorities means that a further stage had been
      reached in terms of official recognition and legitimation. Beyond that, in a national
      context in which demand for differentiation and the power of attraction of a region is
      placing increasing demands on towns, music can be used as nothing short of a "brand":
      although the notion of the "local music scene" is obviously not new, it is currently being
      taken up again by towns making it a predominant vector for their positioning strategies
      in a context of greater inter-town competitiveness. Clermont-Ferrand, Reims and Angers
      are good examples of this: in the case of Angers, the town – surrounded in western France
      by a number of towns with much greater economic and cultural attraction, such as
      Nantes and Rennes – has decided to make contemporary music a vector of its promotion
      directed at its twin towns, including Austin in Texas[9]. The differentiating power of rock
      music is thus being taken seriously and as such the interest being shown by a certain

number of towns in favour of a memory of these types of music is not always unrelated – far from it – to strategic choices. Specific surveys of the way in which local elected officials and the creators of these marketing operations envisage rock music would be interesting in this respect: it is more than likely that what would be found – apart from a feeling of pride that the town had made a significant contribution to the history of rock music – would be a claim to share the dynamism associated with that style of music, not without transmitting the desire for entrepreneurial activism which many French towns, *départements* and regions, in a context of increased decentralisation and economic crisis, uphold. That the town of Angers, given here as an example, recently adopted as the slogan for its promotion a phrase in English – *"Angers Loire Valley"* – which gave rise to a good number of jeering comments and hostile reactions, and that it makes the contemporary music and the local bands it promotes the official flag-bearers and ambassadors of its new credo of economic openness towards foreign partners and the spearheads of its international policy says much about the important place occupied by rock music in the toolboxes of contemporary local politicians.

19   Similarly, some associative and/or federative bodies such as Fédurok, the regional centre for contemporary music in the Pays de la Loire region, which sometimes occupy a place that sociology should define more precisely so that it cannot be confused with that of associations of local amateurs or enthusiasts, as they are much closer to a para-public emanation that sometimes transmits the interests of the local authorities very faithfully – have set up "heritage" committees. To take a significant example, the "Folk Archives" project was devised by the regional centre for contemporary music in the Pays de la Loire region starting in 2008 in order, according to its originators, to "highlight the cultural activism of the region in the past thirty years, in a dynamic of identity and recognition" (*Le Pôle de Coopération des Acteurs pour les Musiques Actuelles en Pays de la Loire*, 2012: 4). Although the project refers explicitly to the artistic work carried out by Jeremy Deller, the content of which was to be seen on display in the *Palais de Tokyo* between September 2008 and January 2009, we may nevertheless think that it remains in part far from the ethnographical spirit and the political critique deployed by the artist[10]. In fact, the Pays de la Loire-style "Folk Archives" project raises a number of questions which cannot be avoided and which are probably inevitable in any undertaking of this kind: does it involve scanning archive material in order to create databanks to be made available to the public? This is indeed a generous intention, and one that is no doubt useful. The questions most frequently encountered obviously revolve around the choice of one archive rather than another, and on the way in which it is to be interpreted and what metadata is to be used. Yet is seems that the main issue is more how to take into account *the stakeholders themselves*, the actual producers or users of the archives. As I have been able to comment to the originators of this project, it makes me think of those family photos some great-great nephew with a sudden passion for family genealogy decides to collect and archive, but is no longer in a position to put a name to any of the faces on the photographs. Processing a plethora of documents without linking them to contexts, practices, and multiple meanings seems to be the main stumbling block in undertakings of this kind. There is a risk that documents of all kinds (posters, musical instruments, record sleeves, radiophonic archives, etc) will congeal into a monosemy that does not do justice to the complexity of rock culture as a social universe, as if the document were purely an end in itself. That is why I believe it is worth pleading in favour of additional arrangements that are not contradictory but indispensable, the ethnographic collection of types of use in the most general meaning of the term (including discourses,

controversies, etc) that link the stakeholders themselves to the material cultures and to the artefacts. This type of approach is particularly time-consuming and, *a priori*, less spectacular than holding and displaying documents with great iconic value – Pete Townshend's guitar mentioned by Marion Leonard in this issue is an excellent example of this – but it is indispensable if we wish to articulate the documentary sources that are to be used as the raw material for the heritage activity and their specific, daily inscription among the *"arts of doing"*. In this respect, we shall note the ambiguity of the expression "immaterial heritage" in connection with music: as Marion Leonard remarks, the definition produced by UNESCO stands out by its catch-all nature. Yet rock music – and Marc Touché's work on this point is unequivocal – is neither material nor immaterial. It is the entanglement, the permanent interconnection of networks of uses and meanings which presuppose objects, techniques, producers, and users. As I have already written with reference to the theory of the stakeholder network:

> "After all, an ordinary electric guitar string – because it is the point of passage, the necessary mediation, between universes as dissimilar but also as interlinked as the stringed instrument maker, the manufacturer of amplifiers, the members of a rock group, practising and gigs, the policies of town or State in favour of contemporary music, the record company, the record-player, couples dancing at a disco or at a party, impresarios, and even the fan of The Cure and Joy Division that I was at the age of 18 – concentrates in itself a total social universe in which technologies and players are closely linked ...." (Le Guern, 2012: 11).

20   It appears that a second crucial question covers the place of *profane* expertise in the valuation of the new heritage items. Associations of enlightened amateurs are certainly nothing new, and they often play a very active role: collectors, militants, enthusiasts and amateurs (within the meaning used by Antoine Hennion, 2009) have actively contributed to the discovery and the promotion of these heritage features, but also by their action and their position they have drawn attention to a series of aspects that extend well beyond considerations of a merely epistemological order: they have been able to throw light on aspects as crucial as to division between private and community or general interest in the face of heritage matters, the way in which the heritage could produce an identity, or be instrumentalised for ideological purposes, the relativity of the hierarchical principles that determine the cut-off point between the *major* and the *minor* heritage, or again the importance of the investments – affective as well as cognitive – to which the heritage may give rise, the affective dimension referring to notions of authenticity, veracity, historical accuracy, and intimacy. A series of recent work – Patrice Flichy (2010), Dominique Cardon (2010) and Richard Sennett (2009), among others – has shown effectively how the watershed between professionals and amateurs, and even between specialists and ordinary punters, was increasingly falling out of line with the re-composition of the framework of expert knowledge as a result of the effects of the new digital technologies. The very notion of "new heritages" includes this redefinition of expert knowledge, because the social networks are reshaping what is commonly called collective intelligence or pooled knowledge, because the new digital tools offer new possibilities for rendering private archives public, because forums and blogs now allow enlightened amateurs to deploy their skills and "practical" knowledge, in the same way as Richard Sennett refers to "craft culture", so that for specific objects or areas they have an evident authority even though they do not necessarily tread the codified paths of academic knowledge, as attested for example by any Internet site devoted to Teppaz record-players[11] or to the legendary group The Shadows[12], to take just two examples from among thousands. In this sense, a project such as "Folk Archives" nowadays comes up

against the question of the frontiers of expertise and the taking into account of vernacular forms of heritage items and the *profane* discourses associated with them.

21   In the final analysis, whatever the stakeholders involved in the heritage activity are and whatever the level at which they operate, it is difficult to conceal the existence of balances of power and of interests that sometimes diverge, and sometimes are even antagonistic – in short, what constitutes the framework of a field in the Bourdieu-type sense of the term – as what is at stake in collection, conservation and presentation is limited merely to methodological issues. As Marion Leonard remarks, "the presentation of rock and pop objects within an institution not only reflects the respectable position of popular culture in the heritage, but also contributes actively to its construction". It may be thought that this field is particularly sensitive in as much as it questions the memories of individuals through a number of series of objects, traces, and clues. It is because of this that the work Jacques Derrida has carried out on consideration of the power of archives, in other words the power to construct and monopolise the power of archives, is indissociably political and psychoanalytical, in as much as it questions the control over the archive as power and the nature of that power. The heritage is not however only everything that leads towards our past; it is also what provides access to the meaning to be attributed to the past.

22   At any event, there can be no doubt as to the answer to the question of whether turning rock music into a heritage feature is a trompe-l'oeil effect or if it is something relatively comparable to what Andreas Huyssen (2003) has qualified as an obsession with heritage: as pointed out, a growing number of towns have taken hold of the subject with a view to making it an element of identity value; many books have been published expressing the history of local rock music scenes, and a growing number of exhibitions (on Jimi Hendrix, Pink Floyd, John Lennon, etc) have been presented in museum settings such as the Cartier Foundation, the *Cité de la Musique* in Paris, and in towns such as Laval, Limoges and Tulles, and there are even a number of permanent collections now, such as those gathered around electro-amplification in Montluçon, etc.

23   The inventory drawn up by Simon Reynolds (2012) – a long litany spread out over more than fifteen pages – confirms this state of affairs and includes the obsession with heritage in a geography of globalisation, indicating at the same time to what extent the memory of rock music contributes to the contemporary phenomenon of the hypertrophy of the memory by becoming itself an item for consumption suitable for absorption by a culture industry that is constantly on the lookout for the spectacular. On this point, it is relatively clear that globalisation has done its work, and while the question of EMI's sale of the Abbey Road studios turned into a national issue for people in Britain, rock museums have been opened in various places in Europe – in Barcelona in 2011, in Trondheim (Norway), and in Hamburg. Founded in Cleveland in 1995, the Rock'n'Roll Hall of Fame may, from this point of view, be considered as one of the inaugural sites and time markers and for this memory activity. In fact, it has taken forty years for a phenomenon whose "birth date" is, at least by convention, given as 1954, to celebrate itself by providing itself not only with historic substance but also, and more importantly, with real self-awareness. This parousia of the rock'n'roll absolute, or the reflective passage from the "within-oneself" to the "for-oneself", was to be followed by many other equivalent arrangements, located in towns with apparently undisputed connections with the history of rock music (Memphis, Chicago, Manchester, Liverpool, etc). Thus Liverpool appears to be nothing short of an open-air museum of Beatle culture, such that, for the visitor

seeking the footsteps of the *Fab Four*, it is often hard to differentiate between objective historical reality and artefactual reconstitution. In saying that, I am referring not only to the famous Cavern, which has moved several metres down the street, but also to the "Beatles Tours" organised by the local taxi companies for tourists and fans wanting to travel in time and space. I experienced for myself the amazing effect produced by the *Magical Mystery Tour* devised by these new-style guides when I set off in one of their taxis in the company of Phil Tagg, a knowledgeable musicologist who spent part of his youth in Liverpool. Totally conversant with the hermeneutic of the Beatles universe, and with a frankly impressive level of erudition, our driver offers to reveal to us the deep and often hidden meaning of the Beatles' best-known songs is a blaze of semiotic fireworks which consisted of overlaying on the places and decors we visited the clues supposedly hidden in the lyrics of the songs. For example, a headstone with the name of Eleanor Rigby in the graveyard of St Peter's parish church, near what was presented to us as the Beatles' first rehearsal venue, served to explain the eponymous song, as did another headstone with the name McKenzie to explain the character of Father McKenzie. In the end, the main effect of the trip was to render the border between the real and the invented somewhat vague and fuzzy. But, to paraphrase Paul McCartney himself, if that "proves a fictitious character exists, that's fine with me".

Memories in digital form

24 The fact remains that the memory boom and the obsession with heritage cannot be dissociated from digital cultures and technologies and their amplifying effect: to take just one example, it is considered that YouTube alone generates more than two million viewings every day connected with musical content, that 72 hours of video are uploaded every minute of the day, and that three billion hours of video are viewed every month. Of the ten most viewed sequences on YouTube, nine are music clips. It is therefore possible to hypothesise that such a substantial change in the cultural eco-system has brought about fundamental consequences not only in terms of the use made of on-line cultural content, but also in our relationship to memory, and it is this last point which will be evoked briefly now.

25 Firstly, it would seem that there is no doubt that we have passed from an era of rarity – and we know since Thorstein Veblen (1899) how that constitutes the principal level for strategies of distinction within the social world – to an era of hyper-abundance and ultra-accessibility. That is precisely what is revealed by the score achieved by Lady Gaga's video *Bad Romance*, seen more than 345 million times on YouTube since it was put on-line in November 2009. This new state of affairs questions our initial disposition to collect, and we are entitled to wonder whether this is not consubstantial with the economic and libidinal logic of the analogue world but meaningless in a digital world. Indeed does the combined effect of the disappearance of rarity and the constantly increasing possibilities of storage (and indexing) not render outdated (and unnecessary) the very impulse to start a collection? This would mean re-thinking the issue of desire – seen as the fulfilment of something missing for Sigmund Freud (1962) and as subversive power for Gilles Deleuze and Felix Guattari (1968) – in the passage from an analogue world in which physical items are distinctive to a digital world in which the same items are no longer valued for their rarity on the market for symbolic goods, but perhaps for other functions, such as their ability to give rise to discussion on the social networks. In this context, we may also

question our relationship with the past and with memory. One of the theses of Simon Reynolds (2012) indeed refers to the idea of historical depth dropping out, and the sense of duration and sequence in the simultaneously temporal and causal dimension: whereas, according to the author, reading the specialist rock music press used to organise a coherent universe in which the history of rock was devised according to genealogical methodology, digital culture tends to weaken these logical, chronological links by amalgamating the artistic references and their links of historic and aesthetic consecution in a soup of instant, unlimited accessibility. In fact, this argument may seem questionable at least because the digital universe has enriched us considerably by offering us access to a vast corpus of information which indeed enables us to place these works in context. The fact remains that this does not dispense us from reflecting on the profound effect the Internet potentially has on the way in which we envisage all these works in their diachronic and synchronic dimensions. What Simon Reynolds points out (2012: 97) is the fact they we are now inheriting substantial archives, but that our consumption methods and our types of use – we may think here of the "random play" mode on an iPod, or the way in which we pass from one item to another on the Internet – "a wandering across time, since video artefacts from different eras are jumbled promiscuously and linked by a latticework of criss-crossing associations". "The Internet places the remote past and the exotic present side by side. Equally accessible, they become the same thing: far, yet near … old yet *now*" (ibid.: 120). The very notion of "now" becomes ambiguous and problematic since it gathers simultaneously a whole raft of documents subjected to the implacable law of the buzz and quasi-instantaneous expiry and the traces of a nostalgic past floating in a poorly defined temporality. Thus 70% of Internet pages apparently have a lifetime of less than four months. And this temporal scrambling is probably compounded by the very fact that the criteria for identifying documents as being originals and their archive value are critical in the digital culture. Indeed this leads on to an underlying question: how should we define the figure of the expert in this new environment? As previously demonstrated, this question touches on the renewal of forms of expertise and expert's profiles, but it also touches on the dimension of fragmented, partial knowledge which renders improbable any ambition to increase its generality. On another level, it is a matter of knowing who controls – i.e. who not only possesses but who also filters, organises, and makes accessible – the enormous quantity of on-line archives that exists, and it is here that the browsers and the technological industry behind them come into play. As Milad Doueihi (2008: 201-203) remarks about Google, "on the one hand it advocates freedom of access and open standards; on the other, it dominates the market to such an extent that is able to determine de facto the access standards, and therefore behave potentially as a dominant or even monopolistic agent in the digital market [...]. On a 'first come, first served' basis [...], the archive has become de facto the property of private entities". To which we may add that our vision of the archive and the heritage as relevant elements selected in relation to the exemplary value of what they transmit – a sense of social evolution, values, references, a history – from one generation to another falls apart to a considerable degree since the digital technologies have more or less abolished the limits of physical space, storage and indexing: potentially, everything that is produced and circulated can be archived immediately, all content put on-line instantly becoming an archive, which Régine Robin (2003) describes as a perpetual present that has eaten through the thickness of historicity. Furthermore, while one of the remarkable properties of digital technology is the possibility of making a copy of a copy of a copy without any

alteration down through successive generations, how are we to be sure we can identify the origin and the original, the authenticating source of any heritage?

26   Finally, considering the ontological status of the archive in a digital scheme and the issues raised by memory inflation does not only mean paying attention to the technological and methodological aspects; it also means considering their moral and political dimension. One of the fundamental questions involves the capacity not only to keep archives, but above all to produce their significance: how can we make archives mean something when they are decontextualised since, taken in isolation, the archive means nothing without the hermeneutic capacity that enables it to speak? How are we to manage – including on the legal level – the fuzzy area where private and public archives meet? And how are we to overcome the risk of crushing the past under a present that is maintained in a constant state of immediacy?

The foundation of the obsession for a rock music heritage

27   The present era seems to be characterised by its obsession for new forms of heritage. How is this obsession to be explained? What are its determining factors? This is the question I would like to turn to now and try to answer, taking into account at least three factors – the technological, sociological and anthropological factors.

28   By using the term "technological factor", my intention is above all to emphasise the very active role that the switch to digital methods has played in the reconfiguration of cultural and memory-related practices connected with archives. Personally, I remember coming across a pirated copy of The Police tucked away in an obscure record shop in Italy when I was 20. I wasn't particularly interested in the group as such, but the object fascinated me – an LP without a cover, with nothing more than "Live at Zellerbach" written in felt-tip pen on the record's central label, which was otherwise totally blank. I had the impression that I was holding a real collector's item, a unique work of contemporary pop, a forbidden, homemade object. The LP immediately occupied a special place in my record collection. As I wrote these lines, the idea came to me to go and see whether the record was referenced on the Internet; it took a fraction of a second to get an answer[13]: it was indeed a pirated copy, but there was no need to go to the furthest parts of Italy to come up with such a nugget. Anyone could discover its existence and its content, order it and even download it, all in just a moment. If, when I was a student, I had had the idea of working on the films of the Beatles in concert, I would probably have had to make several expensive return trips between France and the United Kingdom, not really knowing how to go about the research, and I would probably have missed a good part of the corpus. These days, anyone can access films which the most assiduous *analogue* fans of the Beatles never had the chance to see, and even perhaps were unaware of their existence. The digital scene has made this type of rarity banal, and access to what I used to consider real incunabula has become the everyday experience of contemporary fans who are by no means surprised that the cornucopias of Google and YouTube pour out a continuous flow, free of charge, of the most esoteric of underground content. In those days, getting your hands on the first film appearance of the Beatles singing *Yesterday* would probably have taken considerable effort with no guarantee of success, and would probably have been very discouraging. These days, it takes just one click to get an instant response[14].

Obviously, we should not be unhappy that such possibilities are available: the democratic benefit obtained is both evident and considerable, particularly since many filters that used to be effective no longer function (cost, rarity, the required cultural baggage, etc), but also because it can only serve to increase our personal and common culture, at least for anyone who takes the trouble to take an interest in these archives. In writing that, I am well aware that the issue is not so straightforward, and that abundance and gratuity are necessary but no doubt insufficient conditions for ensuring the democratic triumph of knowledge. On this point, economists in particular have pointed to the role of attention, i.e. mobilisable time as a rare commodity. But that is a different issue, and one which I shall not deal with here. On the other hand, it is worth emphasising how much the digital scheme promotes the transformation of content into archive material, amplifying its importance and the value of vernacular content, and profoundly alters our relationship with the cultural memory.

29   I would add that our awareness of the importance of the clues pointing to this memory of popular types of music has no doubt been accentuated in recent years, under the effect of accidental disasters which, by altering or quite simply wiping off the map whole areas of the musical heritage, made the question of their preservation even more urgent and vital: this was no doubt the case in 2005 when Hurricane Katrina annihilated part of the traces of an entire town's musical activity, and to a lesser extent in 2011 at the time of the rioting in London, when a fire destroyed the stocks of a number of famous independent record labels (Burgel, 2011). In addition to this is the fact that the players in the pioneering days of rock music are now reaching an age that makes it urgent to keep a trace of their personal memories. Although rock culture is relatively recent, its first eye-witnesses are gradually disappearing: the Internet is organising an economy of archival overabundance but, at the same time, there is no truly concerted policy on collecting the memories of the pioneers of rock culture.

30   The second reason that appears to explain the current taste for the rock heritage is of a more sociological order, and is in part linked to generational effects. Thus, for those generations which grew up with rock music, there are two interlinked components: on the one hand, there is an inevitable tendency to return to one's own past, where the souvenir of what rock music was and the emotions associated with it remain alive, particularly as commercial and advertising circles exploit this cynically in a typically post-modern fashion[15]; on the other hand distinctive new uses of rock culture have emerged, and they are not exclusively confined to the *omnivorous* register but have seeped into the *snob* register at the same time as the music has become a component part of the *new legitimate culture* and constitutes a mobilisable cultural resource against a background of the hybridisation of cultivated and popular cultures. It is in this context, marked by both nostalgia and a sense of erudition, that rock music may acquire heritage value. Moreover, as already suggested, rock music has become an element in enhancing territorial value: as such, it has given rise to a good number of exhibitions which stage the local history of this music. That a territory exhibits the proof of its rock past demonstrates to what extent the mythology of the bad boys in their black leather jackets making their amplifiers scream and upsetting the social order has fizzled out. On the contrary, having contributed to the pioneering times of rock is interpreted as a sign of vitality and is celebrated as such by towns trying to promote their identity. However, we should no doubt make an effort to describe the elected officials and decision-makers who promote projects of this type, i.e. determining the generation to which they belong, their

cultural references, their relationship with popular culture and its lifestyles and values. Making rock culture a heritage element on the scale of a territory supposes a particular representation of the citizen and belonging to a community, of individual and collective history, of what deserves – or does not deserve – to be included in the narrative reconstruction of local history of this type. On this specific point, I would like to mention the ironic and disenchanted analysis provided by a museum official in a provincial French town in connection with an exhibition on rock culture held in that town: in his opinion, the idea of rock culture expressed in the exhibition was manifestly dictated by the members of a white, educated middle class – resulting in a form of ignorance or denial of music foreign to their own particular cultural environment and the audiences concerned by such music – who were staging a dominant narrative in keeping with their conception of its aesthetic and social aspects. In this respect, his comments constituted a vibrant plea for the study of heritage phenomena not to be limited to the analysis of arrangements but for it also to involve the sociology of the stakeholders involved. It is evident that an exhibition is never a chemically pure space, as Donna Haraway recalls in her text on the American Museum of Natural History (2007: 147). At first sight, "the museum fulfils its scientific role of conservation, preservation and production of permanence", but on closer inspection, "behind every mounted animal, bronze sculpture or photograph" there lies "a story of race, gender and class" (*ibid.*). In the same way, each exhibition on the history of rock culture should lead to the question of how its history would be (re-)written if it were to be produced from a female, or African, viewpoint, or that of a disco manager or dance-band musician rather than from that of an archetypal rock fan.

31   The last reason, which in my opinion is the most important, underlying the marked interest in turning rock music into a heritage feature, is purely anthropological: set out briefly, this involves our deep relationship with modernity (or, to be more precise, with post- and hyper-modernity) seen in the dual perspective of the re-composition of our sense of space and time. Regarding the temporal dimension, I would like to come back to Andreas Huyssen (2011: 118) and his affirmation that it would be modernity which, by affecting the individual and collective memory and our sense of temporality – through the acceleration of material life and also through the acceleration of mediatised life – would be at the origin of our new sensitivity to memory. This thesis is relatively conventional, and we find the framework of it in the work of writers as different from each other as Paul Virilio (2010), Anthony Giddens (1994), Harmut Rosa (2005), Gilles Lipovetsky (2004) and many others: to sum up, speed destroys space and removes temporal distances. The sense of before and after is replaced by a co-presence of every temporal dimension – simultaneity – by applying computerised and particularly digital technologies. Furthermore, and against a backdrop of capitalism, the present is touched by an entropic phenomenon in which the condition of the possibility of the permanent production of novelty – objects, signs, values, etc – is their programmed obsolescence: according to the attractive wording used by Andreas Huyssen (*ibid.*: 119), "the temporal aspect of such planned obsolescence is of course amnesia. But then amnesia simultaneously generates its own opposite: the new museal culture as a reaction formation". A similar idea is defended by Régine Robin (2003: 425) when she affirms that the world is tending towards an eternal present, and by Jean-François Lyotard (1979) on present-type temporality as a marker of the post-modern condition. In other words, the increase in the disposition for amnesia under the effect of the constant acceleration of time is producing, as its antidote, an increasing taste for the past and its conservation. The contemporary drive in favour of everything to do with heritage is seen as the

consequence of our growing dependence to the *hic et nunc* (the here and now), its opposite, and its reaction. And in an environment dominated by the electronic media and by the digitalisation of the world, it is the material quality of the object that will act as an antidote, as attested for example today by the return to favour of the vinyl record. As Gilles Lipovetsky and Sébastien Charles observed (2004: 83-84),

> "by celebrating the slightest object from the past, invoking the duties of memory, re-mobilising religious traditions, hyper-modernity is not structured by an absolute present, but by a *paradoxical present*, a present that constantly exhumes and 'rediscovers' the past [...]. From the pancake museum to the sardine museum, from the Elvis Presley museum to the Beatles museum, hyper-modern society is contemporary with a passion for heritage and commemoration".

32   If we add to that the crisis in history and the teleological horizon which has been embodied since the 1970s in the different variations in the post-modern idea or, on another level, the loss of authority on the part of the major socialising structures which refers the hyper-modern subject to the individualist paradigm and also the crisis in a "homogenous national temporality" (Robin, 2003: 418), we can understand why use of the heritage appears to be a credible solution to the malaise caused by the increasing acceleration in social change. In other words, the obsession with heritage could well be as much the symptom as the response to the generalisation of a process in which "change is in fact no longer perceived as the transformation of stable structures, but as a fundamental and potential chaotic *indeterminateness*" (Rosa, 2005: 139). If heritage is experienced as what forms the link between the generations, then it is not surprising that it should be envisaged as a prime resource in remedying the effects produced by the passage from an inter-generational modernity to a trans-generational hyper-modernity, and it is in this sense that the rock heritage may offer a solution for continuity between the past and the present, as the present is perceived as being increasingly fragmented and aesthetic currents themselves are becoming increasingly sub-divided, creating targeted niche markets. It is this capacity to offer images and hence a generational imagination which, in the opinion of Georges Balandier (2012: 173-177), characterises the global society and distinguishes it from the over-modernity of the fluid society, constant change, the immediate moment, and anxiety.

33   However, our hyper-modern relationship with the world is not only conditioned by the re-elaboration of the temporal dimension: it is also affected by the modification of spatiality, particularly as an effect of globalisation and the trend towards the standardisation of identities. In this way, the historical reference to rock culture may serve to remedy the feeling of desingularisation engendered by an increasingly globalised market overflowing with "omnibus" products, the homogenising nature of which was noted by Pierre Bourdieu, referring to television fiction programmes. In the context of liberal hyper-modernity, memory and heritage function as resources for re-boosting collective identities. It seems to me that it is this identity aspect – which is now less of a self-evidence and more the result of reflective process – that the Britpop current, with groups like Blur, Pulp and Oasis, was staged (if I may say so) in the 1990s, questioning not only the notion of Britishness and pop's contribution to the production of a rhetoric on Britishness but also the validity of this narrative. Thus it is not an exaggeration to consider that in the United Kingdom the connection between rock culture, heritage and local identity is a dominant feature in interpretation. In an article with a title that tips a wink at Ray Davies and the Kinks, Andy Bennett (1997) starts out from the statement that Britpop is a term used by the local music industry to reaffirm the dominant role of British

pop music in a context of increasing globalisation. In his opinion, however, this involves above all the staging of a particularly problematic idea: what does it mean to be British? Apart from aesthetic properties (accent, chords and harmonic sequences, guitar sounds), Britishness in rock music is connected not only with social factors such as attending art school, but also with the expression of a social realism tinged with auto-irony, of emblematic groups such as the Kinks or the Small Faces. Yet what attracts attention above all is the fact that these groups from the Sixties have had a considerable influence on the Britpop groups which appeared three decades later, which Andy Bennett interprets as the expression of a nostalgic harking back to what has been lost in Britishness. But at the same time he quotes an article published in *The Face* in May 1994 in which Britpop and in particular Blur are seen as the expression of a "new Britishness". At any event, Andy Bennett remarks, after John Fiske (1987), that the new, decisive element that must be taken into account is the appearance of the video clip in the 1990s, which was to allow a new representational rearrangement of the identity-related themes of pop music, a kind of translation of Britishness into visual terms which, as in Blur's video entitled *Parklife*, produced a kind of parodying hotchpotch. In other words, Blur's video is as much a representation of ordinary British life as a representation of clichés on the basis of which Britishness is defined, in a sort of tension between self and self-consciousness, real and ideal, truth and image, in which the predominant feature is what Andy Bennett qualifies as the *"romantic revival of the traditional British working-class identity"*. And indeed one of the issues involved in this idealised representation of Britishness is the importance given to popular culture, and to immigrant populations, in a post-modern British society in which notions of class and race have become much more complicated and hybridised in comparison with the Sixties. More broadly, we may interpret the success of Britpop by its capacity to stage, in a way that comes quite close to the second reflexive modernity theorised by Ulrich Beck (1986), the sense of community and the conviction of identity exalted by the *original pop* from which it draws its inspiration, but in an aloof and often amused fashion. Nevertheless, while the very fact that Britpop draws its inspiration from the codes of original pop is a mark of recognition of its heritage value, the downside is the critical return to the mythicised narrative of the Britishness it expressed. Another article appears to illustrate this question extremely well; it is an article by Emilia Barna (2010) on the sense of the past and the local aspect in the songs of the Kinks – the same group again! – and the Beatles. Adopting the concept of the chronotope formulated by Mikhail Bakhtin (1975), she shows how, in these groups' songs, nostalgia is a recurrent sentiment that is based on references to spatial figures and evocative places, and how more generally pop music brings feelings of security and stability into play. Here also we are able to see how, because it refers to an idealised past in which places and identities remain stable, pop music may respond to the contemporary demand we make on the heritage, that of "unity and meaning, security, and community identity" (Lipovetsky, Charles, 2004: 92).

34　Referring to music as a heritage implies that there is a type of common, collective, inalienable asset. Here we are in the register of the symbolic which produces cohesion, or to use another word, identity: this was precisely the subject dealt with by Pierre Nora (1984; 1986; 1992) in his book entitled *Les lieux de mémoire*, Eric Hobsbawm and Terence Ranger in their *The Invention of Tradition* and even, in many respects, Eric Hobsbawm (1992) on his own in *Nations and nationalism since 1780*, Anne-Marie Thiesse (1999) in *La création des identités nationales*, Régine Robin (2003) and Andreas Huyssen (2011) with regard to Berlin, and Nathalie Heinich in *La fabrique du patrimoine*.

Ms Heinich, for example, seeks to understand our contemporary interest in heritage matters, which she links to three major areas of value: historical value (threatened with destruction or recalling important historical places), symbolic value (of objects or monuments designed as places for the representation of religious or political power), and functional value (aestheticised by turning the object into a heritage feature). However, to come back to rock music, it is fairly obvious that this music is interpreted today as a powerful vector of identity, particularly at the local level, since what the exhibitions and historical narratives promote concerns primarily local music, local stars, local emotions, local sounds, etc. To this historical dimension should be added the geographical perspective, in the light of numerous attempts to present this history in spatial terms, which in fact has the effect of over-determining those practices most closely connected to the topological dimension, such as those connected with the rehearsal room or the gig venue, places of socialisation (the record shop, the pub, the music shop, etc), the places where the musicians live more particularly: thus a colloquy in Liverpool in 2011 focused on "mapping musical memoryscapes", "towards a geosonic mapping of a better past", "locating the Bristol Sound", and "putting the psycho in psycho-geography", all headings that provide a fair indication that being part of a memory cannot be dissociated from inclusion in a given geography.

Memory regained

35 It is here that my journey reaches its end… From Liverpool, it has taken me to Laval in the wake of an exhibition entitled "Rock in Laval", and to Avignon[16], in the footsteps of mid-Fifties rockers – two provincial towns less well-known for their musical activity than for their agricultural production and the theatre, but which nevertheless have much to teach us about the way in which we stage that history.

36 Quoting Henry-Pierre Jeudy's *La machinerie patrimoniale*, Régine Robin (2003: 428) retells the story of a museum of "reconstituted arts" in Japan: it presents all the works that supposedly encapsulate Western artistic culture, and they are even protected, but they are all copies. Such a set-up inevitably raises questions regarding the status of authenticity, and the fact that it is henceforth possible for the image to precede the real thing (such that, as Régine Robin suggests, the real thing becomes merely the updated version of possible content in the fictionalisation of the world: for example, the 11 September attacks would constitute an update of the films *Independence Day* and *The Towering Inferno* in our attempts to avoid provisional arrangements and instability. The museum is of course an exception, even though it embodies, in its own way, the lack of distinction computerisation creates between the original and its copy. In an exhibition like the one in Laval, all the objects are or seem to be originals. The route through the exhibition is carefully commentated, glass-fronted display cabinets provide protection for the musical instruments, and there are photographs of local groups, record sleeves, a reconstitution of a rehearsal room, a van of the type used by musicians on tour in those days – in short, just about everything a visitor would expect to find at such an event. And yet nothing is self-evident in an exhibition of this kind, despite all the goodwill and the seriousness demonstrated by its originators: what narrative is proposed? Could this rock story be told in any other, different, ways? Whose memory is being presented? What policy has been favoured regarding its signs? How does it speak to locally elected representatives, and to its different publics? Has the work involved in turning something

into a heritage item been the subject of compromise? How can ordinary artefacts give an account of rock as a life-force? And so on.

Compiling the history of rock music

37   Working on the history of rock music raises a number of difficulties. It is necessary to bear in mind the way words have mutated and meanings have shifted: the existence of many puns and much wordplay is evidence of a world in constant mutation. For example, a local newspaper in the south of France (*Le Dauphiné Libéré*) ran an article in 1956 on "the young leader of a gang of hoodlums subjected to a mental examination at the criminal court in Avignon". In 1956 the word used for a hoodlum ("*chenapan*") carried a very heavy pejorative burden, since is designated young offenders brought before the courts and subjected to prison sentences – the same people who then began to be referred to as "black leather jackets" ("blousons noirs"). The same word used nowadays has a much milder meaning. Another difficulty is that most research into the history of rock in France ignores a number of aspects that are nevertheless central to the theme: for example, the link between playing music and its secondary aspects such as alcohol, drugs, flirting, sex, etc. Or again, the relationship with the instruments used, with the musician's *tools*, in their ordinariness and even in their triviality. With a small number of exceptions, everything is related as if the story was above all one of musical practices, and all the other aspects are completely disregarded. Another major problem concerns the periodisation of the history of rock music: some time ago, Marc Touché brought to my attention an original text printed in a magazine from the mid-1930s (*Musette*, 1936), devoted to the accordion. This text is a rare and very enlightening piece: it refers to French specialists in the instrument – the instrument *par excellence* of the local hop and the popular song [in France] – travelling to America to discover the electric guitar, which they then tell us "has a great future ahead of it" and that the sound it makes evokes both the organ and the saxophone. What does the text tell us? A number of things. Firstly, giving the date of birth of rock music as 1954, as does Richard Peterson (1990) for example, causes some problems. Rock music is not a pure form "born" by spontaneous generation, but the product of a very gradual differentiation from other musical styles. This point is particularly obvious if we observe audiences: in the Fifties, singers of the likes of Gilbert Bécaud or musicians such as Sydney Bechet – people no-one nowadays would classify as rock musicians! – nevertheless provoked fervent and even hysterical behaviour (broken chairs, screaming), which places them in the same group as the rockers. Secondly, reading the press from the second half of the 1950s, we realise that rock was a vague genre defined more by stylistic characteristics than by its ambiences and its sensory impact on audiences. In 1956, at the time of the creation of Avignon's rock'n'roll club, rock was described as music and a "feverish dance" close to a "trance". In an article entitled "Avignon shaken by fever – rock and roll hits the scene successfully" (*Le Dauphiné Libéré* newspaper), summing up a rock evening at the Ambassy, there are references to "swing, bebop, jitterbug, boogie-woogie", and an

> "almost feverish even anguished anticipation, since the newcomer was none other than the famous Rock & Roll. [...] Everyone is talking about R'n'R without knowing much at all about it. [...] It has been said that R'n'R is not an art, but merely normal music played backwards, producing an amazing effect on the crowd, [...] and setting the nerves on edge."

38   Indeed the major narratives on rock music have accustomed us to the idea that the music's pioneers affirmed their independence from styles of music and performers (Frank Sinatra, the big jazz bands) which *did not speak* to young people and were felt to be *outdated*. There again, this point deserves discussion, and it varies greatly according to whether one is in Paris or the provinces, in the mid-Fifties or in the early Sixties. In fact, most of the musicians I personally interviewed in the Fifties, the Sixties and even the Seventies did not limit themselves to a single repertoire, but combined playing jazz or easy-listening with their rock music. In fact, very few groups designated themselves exclusively as rock bands before the mid-Sixties. In fact, the borders seem to be fairly vague and even very porous: as for example Roger Blanchard, a musician well-known in Avignon in the mid-Fifties; even though his band was called New Orleans and the name would lead a potential audience to believe that it played jazz, its participation in the creation of the rock-and-roll club in 1956 shows that it was also interested in rock music. During the same period there were also "rock-jazz" groups (such as Jean-Pierre and his quintet) which had more traditional instruments and a leader who played the accordion, an instrument more generally associated with easy-listening music and the local hop. Considering dancing – an activity that has attracted little study even though it has been a central feature in the history of popular music in France – is very enlightening from this point of view. On the one hand is the standardised image of the local hop, at which the accordion is the central instrument, and on the other the many bands which played a repertoire taken mainly from pop and rock, right up to the early 1980s, at which point mobile discos starting to constitute competition for both. Although the local hop is systematically described as something people attended in order to dance, there is much evidence to indicate that people also went to these dances to listen to groups playing the current hits, with two-thirds of the audience sometimes standing in front of the stage, enjoying a cover version that was sometimes extremely close to the original. One musician told me how he was once completely bowled over by a dance band performing a perfect version of Procol Harum's *Whiter Shade of Pale* – a perfect example of the very special relationship that builds up between an audience and the best dance bands. Indeed it is significant that these bands – which used to play for five hours without a break and had a repertoire of about a hundred pieces at their fingertips – emphasised the quality of the sound they produced and their ability to play a faithful version of the original. Another musician, one of the very first to play a synthesiser in Angers and who became a demonstrator for the Korg brand in the 1980s after he left the dance scene, told me of the feeling of wonder and amazement in audiences when the first Mellotrons appeared in dance bands. This is a theme Roland Barthes was to explore (1980) in relation to the wonder aroused by photography in its infancy. It seems to me that a history of rock music should also take this dimension into account. At this time, at any rate, there were very few suitable venues for rock concerts in France and the local hop, in conjunction with evenings at casinos, was the most obvious route not only for performing in public but also for making a living from music, like the Shouters in Laval and Atlas in Angers. The stories musicians tell of playing for these gigs are not very different from those told by rock groups: travelling in a van, two or three "concerts" each weekend, contracts managed by an impresario, very comfortable income, and sometimes a fan club, playing the first half for stars, etc. The evolution in equipment (amplifiers, guitars, sound systems) was also a mark of the beginning of professionalisation: since it was impossible to obtain American instruments (Gibsons and Fenders) in the Fifties and even in the early Sixties in provincial towns, it was the instruments that could be obtained mainly from Germany

(Framus and Hofner guitars, Echolette sound systems) and northern Europe (Egström guitars), and the hand-made guitars and equipment produced by craftsmen in France (Garen amplifiers, Stimer microphones, Jacobacci guitars) that created the sound of the time.

39   Lastly, the mythology of rock has been built up on the idea of a head-on opposition of the generations, the emergence of a youth culture – a "yé-yé culture", to use the expression coined by Edgar Morin in 1963. And in this context, it is above all the cinema – *The Wild One* with Marlon Brando in 1956, for example – which contributed to the emerging social representations of rock culture: "This film comes to us in France in the wake of a great fuss; it was a huge success in America, and in London, unleashing spectacular scenes of collective hysteria" (*Le Dauphiné Libéré* newspaper). Another example is the film *Rock Around the Clock*:

> "A number of admirers of *Rock Around the Clock* tried to storm a Belgian police station; the film had been banned in Mons/Bergen in Belgium after tumultuous scenes in the streets ". [...] On leaving the cinema, a number of young people who had viewed the film in a state of slightly delirious frenzy then wanted to continue manifesting their enthusiasm. Their action having provoked 'paternal' remonstrance from the police, they then stormed the police station, which they bombarded with potatoes, tomatoes and eggs. The authorities retained the upper hand, of course, and in order to prevent the occurrence of any similar incidents, it was decided to ban the film on the grounds that it was far too suggestive." (*ibid.*)

40   Although the figure of a young man in a black leather jacket has left a lasting mark in the rock'n'roll mind and is attested in a number of works, it is nevertheless a fact that it was an epiphenomenon, as the attachment of young people to the values and lifestyle rock music epitomised took effect only gradually. This is demonstrated by advertising in the mid-Fifties, when listening to the radio and music were viewed as constituting a generational divide. For example, in an article entitled "The radio war will not take place, or, the life of a closely-knit family in 1954" (*Le Dauphiné Libéré* newspaper), we see how the representation of the family is organised around differentiated cultural practices: the father listens quietly to the radio, which his daughter and her friends dance – energetically – to music from a record playing on a record-player. It is true that each generational stratum appears to have its own specific cultural practices, but this distribution of preferences according to age is put forward as a factor of balance and domestic harmony, not as a factor of antagonism between conservative parents and their rebellious offspring.

41   Indeed the surveys that Marc Touché and I have carried show that joining the rock movement does not necessarily give rise to conflict between adults and young people, or – to be more precise – generational opposition does not focus on the actual music, but rather on certain elements of the lifestyle that goes with rock'n'roll. Thus Marc Touché, after hundreds of interviews, was only able to report two cases of conflict in which the parents smashed their offspring's electric guitars. For my part, I have noted many more reports of positive assistance and tacit consent on the part of parents in respect of their offspring than the opposite. In fact, what parents complained about regarding their children was more likely to their hair being too long or their style of clothes, and little about the music they were playing or listening to, and even then it must be remembered that the "rebel" looks only appeared in the Sixties – before that, groups generally wore suits. The social milieu also worked in favour of the acceptance of certain looks: the quiff hairstyle adopted by young men from a working-class background was not perceived

negatively, for example. In general, the eyewitness evidence we have suggests that parents were relatively tolerant of rock'n'roll. This tolerance, for reasons we shall not develop here, extended to a good part of the social body and is to be found, for example, in the assistance many priests gave to budding rock groups, as parish premises were often used for rehearsals and even as concert venues.

Staging the history of rock music

42   Rock does not escape the usual difficulties of any historiographic undertaking. And as Michel de Certeau rightly remarked (1990: 206), "historiography is not at all about what has come down to us from the past, but what comes from us and attempts to supply a certain type of intelligibility of what we are told is the past, or what we think of as the past". In relation to rock, this applies to the interpretations that have been given of the rhetoric of revolt, which may be read today as the exploitation, rationalised by capitalism, of the rebel posture as a signal of credibility and ideological justification (Chastagner, 2011: 145 et seq.). I find this conception of the work of historiography particularly accurate, and it seems to me that staging the history of rock music in the form of exhibitions is a particularly good way of getting this idea across. I shall therefore refer in this article to the description of an exhibition set up in February 2010 on the history of rock music in Laval during the period from 1960 and 2000, and more particularly to an analysis of two scenes that form part of the exhibition: the first is the reconstitution of a teenager's bedroom in the 1980s, and the second is the reconstitution of a rehearsal room.

43   In the first case, spectators find themselves looking at a music fan's room: there are posters, equipment for playing cassettes, etc – the entire semiotic of an adolescent's living space – but what disturbs me as a spectator is the fact that this space – about thirty square metres – gives a distorted perception of the living conditions of an average teenager in France at the time. This point may appear anecdotic, but I feel it is not: listening to music when one is a teenager also depends largely on the family's living conditions, on available space, whether or not it is possible to separate oneself from other people and as a result to be able to listen to the music at a more or less loud volume; in a word, it depends on the social milieu and material conditions. Listening to music is not an activity that exists outside the social sphere. It is this idea which is staged for example in the film on Ian Curtis and Joy Division, Anton Corbin's *Control* (2007), when we see Ian Curtis shut himself inside his room to escape from the parental universe and listen to records. An exhibition of course chooses a form that inevitably produces shortcuts in terms of what is signified, but this fact deserves to be raised. The other example – the rehearsal venue – is interesting because it claims to be highly objective: indeed the public does not really know whether this is a reconstitution or the display of real rehearsal premises acquired from a group, and there is no indication that truly gives any detail. Yet here it is not only the authenticity issue which raises a problem, but rather the way in which the premises displayed reduces the space left for what is possible. Being a musician myself, and having in the past practised in the attic of the family home with my synthesisers and a beat box, I feel totally excluded from this scene which displays rock to advantage, with its culture of guitars, practising as a group, playing loudly and drinking beer – all things to which I am a total stranger in my experience of being a musician. The premises are for me the mark of a dominant conception – a *rock-centred* conception – of

what rock music is or should be, and excludes *de facto* everything that diverges from the norm represented. It is in this that I feel it is an issue, and it is exactly this which the exhibition's scientific advisor highlighted when I asked him:

"The bedroom and the rock music rehearsal room are not reconstitutions; they are installations, in that they are works that have been totally created for the exhibition. In a work, they are items of fiction, scenes drawn from meetings. For the bedroom, for example, it is the bedroom of a girl who is a fan of rock music and more particularly a fan of a Laval group – we are in the 1980s, in Laval. The choices were made by the youngest members of the team, for whom the Eighties were legendary. The furniture was found in charity shops or lent by various people. My wife Sylvie pointed out, for example, that there was always a bra lying around on the bed in a girl's bedroom. I felt that was an important clue, but even in a rock exhibition it wasn't taken seriously. Personally, I was against choosing the bedroom of a girl in the 1980s for some time, as I thought that if just one room was to be presented it would be better to concentrate on the period of change and the emergence of what was to become the archetypical imagery of an adolescent's room in the mid-Sixties, with a record-player and a transistor, evidence of the turning point in the shift away from a personal bedroom with an acoustic ambiance towards the electro-amplified bedroom ... The question of social milieu has always been a problem: we sociologists are always treated as nuisance-makers... the presentation is very obviously positioned in the middle classes. So, in short, the room had two great advantages – it broached the subject of both gender (a girl's room) and being a fan. For the rehearsal room, we had to present a reconstitution of a punk rock room in the Eighties/Nineties that I had had included in the stock for French museums in 1995; it had already been presented a number of times and seen by a lot of musicians (adults, anarchist punk rock, working-class) – created on the site of a rubbish dump in Les Mureaux, a town in the Yvelines *département*. The complicated loan of an "ecological unit" of this kind might have proved impossible. I had suggested we keep the punk rock dimension in a more DIY style – that we would try to produce a collective creation, a fictitious installation of a place that could have existed in Laval in the Eighties/Nineties. I set up a steering committee of musicians from those generations. They lent their equipment, and the team collected egg-boxes from market stalls, like the groups used to do. Collectively, we had established and validated the elements we needed for this presentation of one single vision among many of what practising was like – it was a vision that proved to be representative of a major trend in the Laval area. The musicians created their "den", reproducing as faithfully as possible their own local experience. With equipment played locally. A few days before the inauguration, the musicians spent an evening in the room, leaving living proof of their way of life, with cigarette butts and beer... The discussion focused on "that could have been water", "no tobacco", "but that's what musicians were like", and so on. Once we had collected these remarks, we then indicated visibly that it was one point of view among many with regard to rehearsing, and added a plastic water bottle... It was still a creation, a view, on the basis of the work of a steering committee of adult musicians, as proposed by a sociologist...."

Photographs 3 and 4. Reconstitution of a teenager's bedroom in the 1980s. "Rock in Laval" exhibition (photographs: P. Le Guern, 2010).

Photographs 5 and 6. Reconstitution of a rehearsal room in the 1908s. "Rock in Laval" exhibition (photographs: P. Le Guern, 2010).

Questioning heritage policies

44   The reader will have realised that this preambulatory text has not been written by an expert on archives, exhibitions or cultural heritage. It expresses rather the curiosity aroused – for the specialist in working-class culture – by what seems to me to be a phenomenon of the expansion and inflation of the heritage-enhancing activity in the field of present-day music styles, and more generally the saturation of the present by the evocation of memory (Robin, 2003: 451 et seq.). As a listener and a musician, I wonder about the diagnosis reached by Simon Reynolds (2012) of our era, which he qualifies as "retromanic", and as an observer of digital technologies in their anthropological dimension, I look with interest at the way in which the passage from analogue archiving to digital archiving is totally transforming our very conception of memory.

45   This issue brings together seven contributions, and one common question circulates from one to another: what should we think of policies on constituting the heritage: in other words, more or less what Jacques Derrida (1995) refers to as not only the "power over a document – holding it, keeping it, and interpreting it", but also the "desire for memory". Robert Knifton is the first, taking as examples heritage sites of relevance to the history of the music scene in Manchester, and looking at the role played by the Internet in the emergence of vernacular memory. At the same time – by a re-reading of Jacques Derrida – the question arises of expertise and control over archives: should we conserve and

promote all traces of memory and the various versions of a same musical history, granting them identical importance? The second text relates, from the inside and adopting what we may call a socio-analytical posture, the efforts of a sociologist-cum-exhibition-curator to bring electro-amplified music and its history/histories into collections and exhibitions. Marc Touché lets us in on a very particular experience, since he is both the object and the subject of this narrative, in which he sums up 20 years spent inventorying collection arrangements and presenting them to the public: we see in particular the importance of definition issues, the necessity to keep a degree of distance from narratives of the history of rock that correspond to a reality in the English-speaking world but do not take account of the specific features of this history seen from France, the prudence that is necessary when dealing with what the author refers to as "purified history", carrying the germ of a type of cultural revisionism. One of the major points of interest in this contribution is also that it enables us to understand how turning this music into a heritage item – which for a long time in France has been the work of a number of relatively isolated specialists, including Marc Touché – has come about, and which paradigms and methods it feeds off. This text on the way in which the materials that constitute the history of contemporary music are collected and displayed is also a text on the history of the heritage undertaking itself.

46   The three texts that follow are united by a common aim: that of reporting on the heritage arrangements designed for popular music, manifesting its singularity and the points of view that underpin them. Firstly, Marion Leonard, a specialist in *heritage studies* at Liverpool University, takes a look at an artefact that all rock fans know well; it has an iconic value that is metonymic of rock envisaged as a life force and the overspill of juvenile energy – the guitars that Pete Townshend, guitarist with The Who, used to smash on stage. By comparing the way in which these guitars are displayed in two radically different places – the highly academic Victoria & Albert Museum in London and the highly commercial Hard Rock Café in Chicago –, Marion Leonard attempts to demonstrate the effect the context and the set-up have on the perception of such objects and on the meaning and value given to them. Cynthia Willis-Chun is interested, for her part, in one of the museums – if not the museum – best known for the place they occupy in the mediation of rock culture: the Rock 'n' Roll Hall of Fame in Cleveland. Whereas most analyses focus on the content on display, the author chooses rather to look at the actual architecture. This brings her to see in this architecture the translation of a sort of egalitarian *ethos* in which it is not so much the museum which imposes its significations on the public as the public which is invited to bring its significations into the museum. Lastly, Gaëlle Crenn takes a look at the question of how museums can take up the challenge constituted by exhibiting and enhancing cultural forms that are often considered to be illegitimate or unauthentic, such as popular music: she studies two exhibitions presented at the Powerhouse Museum in Sydney in 2011 ("The Eighties are Back!" and "Abbaworld") and describes the scenography-related attitudes adopted in bringing these types of music into the museum, interpreting them as so many attempts to legitimise their inclusion in museums.

47   There are two final texts, each referring to the idea of the musical heritage as a special resource in the strategy developed by local authorities in defining their identity. The heritage may thus be conceived as a particularly mobilising and effective lever in promoting the local area, particularly in the context of greater competition among major cities. This is what Elsa Broclain shows with the case of Argentinian tango which has

become, in Buenos Aires, a preponderant element of the political and identity-related project being carried out by the city. At the same time, however, the author demonstrates that the tango could also be appropriated by competing stakeholders, who then defend a more "purist" conception of its music. This tension between two ideologically and strategically opposed visions of one type of music then gives rise to a reflection on heritage as an instrument of power. The fact remains, as Juliette Dalbavie in turn shows, that there are some "untamed" practices which do not fit inside the memory framework set up by the institutions: thus in Sète setting up a museographic space dedicated to the singer Georges Brassens has not done away with the commemorative practices of his fans, who continue to visit his grave, which is just a few metres away from the museum. While this article is a pretext for describing the forms of attachment associated with the tomb, it also makes it possible to understand how the local authorities have gradually appropriated this form of memory in order to consider it as being complementary to the "official" heritage arrangements.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Akrich M., Callon M., Latour Br., éds, 2006, *Sociologie de la traduction : textes fondateurs*, Paris, Presses des Mines.

Bakhtine M., 1975, *Esthétique et théorie du roman*, trad. du russe par O. Daria, Paris, Gallimard, 1978.

Balandier G., 2012, *Carnaval des apparences*, Paris, Fayard.

Barna E., 2010, « "There are places I'll remember..." : A Sense of Past and Locality in the Songs of the Beatles and the Kinks ». Accès : http://iipc.utu.fi/overground/. Consulté le 31/10/12.

Barthes R., 1980, *La Chambre claire : note sur la photographie*, Paris, Gallimard/Éd. Le Seuil/Cahiers du cinéma.

Beck U., 1986, *La société du risque. Sur la voie d'une autre modernité,* trad. De l'allemand par L. Bernardi, Paris, Aubier, 2001.

Bennett A., 1997, « "Village greens and terraced streets" : Representations of "Britishness" in Britpop », *Young : Nordic Journal of Youth Research*, vol. 5 (4), pp. 20-33.

Burgel Th., 2011, « Émeutes en Angleterre : l'industrie anglaise du disque part en fumée », lesinrocks.com, 9 août. Accès : http://www.lesinrocks.com/2011/08/09/musique/emeutes-en-angleterre-lindustrie-anglaise-du-disque-part-en-fumee-1111198/. Consulté le 31/10/12.

Burnand Fr., 2011, « Let's P.U.N.K the Museum », 29 juil. Accès : http://www.swissinfo.ch/fre/culture/sortir/Let_s_P.U.N.K_the_Museum_!.html?cid=30734300. Consulté le 31/10/12.

Cardon D., 2010, *La démocratie internet. Promesses et limites*, Paris, Éd. Le Seuil.

Certeau M. de, 1987, *Histoire et psychanalyse. Entre science et fiction*, Paris, Gallimard, 2002.

— 1990, *L'invention du quotidien. 1 - Arts de faire*, Paris, Gallimard.

Chastagner Cl., 2011, *De la culture rock*, Paris, Presses universitaires de France.

Danto A., 2000, *La madone du futur*, trad. de l'américain par Cl. Hary-Schaeffer, Paris, Éd. Le Seuil, 2003.

Dauncey H., Le Guern Ph., 2010, *Stereo: Comparative Perspectives on the Sociological Study of Popular Music in France and Britain*, Londres, Ashgate.

Derrida J., 1995, *Mal d'archive. Une impression freudienne*, Paris, Galilée.

Deleuze G., Guattari F., 1968, *Capitalisme et schizophrénie. L'anti-Œdipe*, Paris, Éd. de Minuit.

Doss E., 1999, *Elvis Culture : Fans, Faith, & Image*, Lawrence, University of Kansas Press.

Doueihi M., 2008, *La grande conversion numérique*, Paris, Éd. Le Seuil.

Drouguet N., 2005, « Succès et revers des expositions spectacles », *Culture et Musées*, 5, vol. 5, pp. 65-90.

Fiske J., 1987, *Television culture*, Londres, Methuen.

Flichy P., 2010, *Le sacre de l'amateur. Sociologie des passions ordinaires à l'ère numérique*, Paris, Éd. Le Seuil.

Foucault M., 1969, *L'archéologie du savoir*, Paris, Gallimard.

Freud S., 1962, *Introduction à la psychanalyse*, Paris, Payot.

Frith S., 1991, « Souvenirs, souvenirs… », pp. 247-262, *in* : Hennion A., Mignon P., dirs, *Rock, de l'histoire au mythe*, Paris, Éd. Anthropos.

Giddens A., 1994, *Les conséquences de la modernité*, trad. de l'anglais par O. Meyer, Paris, Éd. L'Harmattan.

Ginzburg C., 1989, *Mythes, emblèmes et traces. Morphologie et histoire*, trad. De l'italien par M. Aymard, Paris, Flammarion.

Haraway D., 2007, *Manifeste cyborg et autres essais. Sciences – Fictions – Féminismes*, Éd. L'Attribut.

Heinich N., 2009, *La fabrique du patrimoine. De la cathédrale à la petite cuillère*, Paris, Éd. La Maison des sciences de l'homme.

Hennion A., 2009, « *Réflexivités*. L'activité de l'amateur », *Réseaux*, 153, vol. 27, pp. 55-78.

Hobsbawm E., 1992, *Nations et nationalismes depuis 1780. Programme, mythe et réalité*, trad. de l'anglais par D. Peters, Paris, Gallimard, 2001.

Hobsbawm E., Ranger T., 1983, *The invention of tradition*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press.

Huyssen A., *La hantise de l'oubli. Essais sur les résurgences du passé*, Paris, Kimé, 2011.

Jeudy H.-P., 2001, *La machinerie patrimoniale*, Paris, Sens &Tonka.

Kirby A., 2009, *Digimodernism : How New Technologies Dismantle the Postmodern and Reconfigure Our Culture*, Londres, Continuum.

Le club des mangeurs de disques, 2012, « Le rock au musée et autres considérations quasi philosophiques ! (Billet d'humeur) », 6 avr. Accès : http://le-club-des-mangeurs-de-disques.blogspot.fr/2012/04/le-rock-au-musee-et-autres.html. Consulté le 31/10/12.

Le Guern Ph., 2012, « Irréversible ? Musique et technologies en régime numérique », *Réseaux*, 172, 2012/2, pp. 29-64.

Lipovestky G. et Charles S., 2004, *Les temps hypermodernes*, Paris, Grasset.

Lyotard J.-Fr., 1979, *La condition postmoderne : rapport sur le savoir*, Paris, Éd. de Minuit.

Malfettes S., 2012, American rock trip, Bruxelles, Éd. Zones sensibles.

Marcus G., 2001, *Mystery Train : images de l'Amérique à travers le Rock'n'roll,* trad. de l'américain par H. Esquié et J. Malle, Paris, Allia.

Morin E., 1963a, « "Salut les copains" : I. Une nouvelle classe d'âge », *Le Monde*, 6 juil.

— 1963b, « "Salut les copains" : II. "Le yé-yé" », *Le Monde*, 7 juil.

Musette. Revue trimestrielle d'éducation musicale des orchestres musettes, 1936, déc., p. 4.

Nora P., 1984, *Les lieux de mémoire 1. La République*, Paris, Gallimard.

— 1986, *Les lieux de mémoire 2. La Nation*, Paris, Gallimard.

— 1992, *Les lieux de mémoire 3. Les France*, Paris, Gallimard.

Peterson R., 1990, « Why 1955 ? Explaining the Advent of Rock Music », *Popular Music*, 1, vol. 9, janv.

Pôle de coopération des acteurs pour les musiques actuelles en Pays de la Loire, 2012, *Rapport d'étapes sur la réflexion engagée par les acteurs musiques actuelles des Pays de la Loire réunis au sein du pôle sur les archives sonores et écrites.* Accès : http://www.lepole.asso.fr/fichiers/chantiers/ Projet_Folk_Archives_Sept2012.pdf. Consulté le 31/10/12.

Poli M.-S., 2003, « L'exposition produit-elle du discours médiatique », *Médiamorphoses*, 9, pp. 36-41.

Ricœur P., 2000, *La mémoire, l'histoire, l'oubli*, Partis, Éd. Le Seuil.

Robin R, 2003, *La mémoire saturée*, Paris, Stock.

Rosa H., 2005, *Accélération. Une critique sociale du temps*, trad. de l'allemand par D. Renault, Paris, Éd. La Découverte, 2010.

Reynolds S., 2012, *Retromania. Comment la culture pop recycle son passé pour s'inventer un futur*, Marseille, Éd. Le mot et le reste.

Segré G., 2003, *Le culte Presley*, Paris, Presses universitaires de France.

Sennett R., 2009, « Nouveau capitalisme et expertise quotidienne. Entretien avec Richard Sennett », *Cahiers internationaux de Sociologie*, vol. 126, janv.-juin, pp. 13-20.

Scott V. H-F, 2008, « Les archives d'art contemporain », *Perspective*, 3, pp. 455-461.

Thiesse A.-M., 1999, *La création des identités nationales*, Paris, Éd. Le Seuil.

Touché M., 2007, « Muséographier les musiques électro-amplifiées. Pour une socio-histoire du sonore », *Réseaux*, 141-142, 2, pp. 97-141.

Veblen Th., 1899, *Théorie de la classe de loisir*, trad. De l'anglais par L. Évrard, Paris, Gallimard, 1979.

Virilio P., 2010, *Le grand accélérateur*, Paris, Galilée.

Zacheo R., 2011, « Le punk meurt enfin, dans un musée », *Le Temps*, La semaine culturelle, 5 févr. Accès : http://www.letemps.ch/Facet/print/Uuid/3fd853ee-30a7-11e0-b498-e6f91d31c496/ Le_punk_meurt_enfin_dans_un_mus%C3%A9e. Consulté le 31/10/12.

NOTES

1. Presentation of the exhibition of the Internet site of the *Zentrum für Kunst und Medientechnologie* (art and media technology centre) in Karlsruhe at http://on1.zkm.de/zkm/stories/storyReader $7919. Consulted on 31 October 2012. Translated from the English [for the original text in French] by R. Hahusseau.

2. Examples of this include the constitution of archives and collections, dedicated exhibitions and museums, the collector and vintage culture, the aesthetics of parody and quotation, the economic rationalisation of the taste for the past, the turning of rock music into heritage as a new category in public action, the publication of works on local rock stories and the multiplication of television programmes devoted to the subject, making archives available on-line on the Internet, the setting up of academic seminars on the history of rock music, etc.

3. "So music museums contain the ancillary stuff (instruments and stage costumes, posters and packaging) but not the main thing itself" (Reynolds, 2012: 39).

4. H. Haucke (quoted in: S. Denninger, 2004, "Le Musée du rock", Tracks). Access: http://www.arte.tv/fr/702878,CmC=702818.html. Consulted on 31 October 2012.

5. Once again, the term "rock" is used for the sake of convenience, although it is realised that there is a conflict between the categories in which it is placed; the elasticity of the ecological and historical sets to which expressions such as "rock" and "contemporary music" refer is however a good demonstration of the tension and absence of a priori evidence of the difference between past and present.

6. "The past is where we meet, in one form or another, resistance from what no longer is [...]. Absence, in historical discourse, is the condition of the possibility it reveals by deploying itself." (Certeau, 2002: 192)

7. On the Internet site of Vinyle-actu.fr and the chat-room forum chaud7.forumactif.fr, see: http://www.vinyle-actu.fr/marre-du-180-grammes-marre-des-double-lp-marre-du-colored-vinyl and http://chaud7.forumactif.fr/t374-le-poids-du-vinyle. Consulted on 31 October 2012.

8. See: http://www.artmony.biz/t3897-le-retour-du-disque-vinyles. Consulted on 31 October 2012.

9. See http://www.francerocks.net/austin2012/bureau-export-angers-loire-valley-party-at-brush-square/. Consulted on 31 October 2012.

10. See interview with Jeremy Deller (*Palais de Tokyo*). Access:

http://www.zerodeux.fr/interviews/jeremy-deller-au-palais-de-tokyo/. Consulted on 31 October 2012.

11. See http://www.teppaz-passion.fr/. Consulted on 31 October 2012.

12. See http://shadowmaniacs.free.fr/. Consulted on 31 October 2012.

13. See: http://vivalesbootlegs.blogspot.fr/2009/05/police-live-at-zellerbach-berkeley.html. Consulted on 31 October 2012.

14. See: http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bejRDvWzpHc&feature=related. Consulted on 31 October 2012.

15. "From youth counter-culture to shop-counter culture", to use S. Frith's witty expression (1991: 250).

16. With reference to this incident in Avignon, I refer to the dense, meticulous work carried out by one of my students, Patricia Bastit, who attempted to answer the question "Did rock exist in Avignon in 1954?" by exploring archives and going through numerous interviews.

AUTHORS

PHILIPPE LE GUERN

Centre Atlantique de Philosophie

Nantes University

Philippe.Leguern@univ-nantes.fr