

# Dimensions of Heritage and Memory

Multiple Europes and the Politics of Crisis

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and belonging

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## 10 Final thoughts<sup>1</sup>

### Heritage as a dimension of collectivity and belonging

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Why can't all the countries see that a lot of refugees don't belong in Europe?

[Who] does belong to Europe? Perhaps [the] Celts should kick all us newcomers out?

(Quora dialogue, October 2016<sup>2</sup>)

Some of the key problematics discussed in literature on European heritage – including in this book – concern the politically instrumental construction of a shared past, implicating shared values and identities, designed to fashion a transnational demos from numerous national citizenries. This is a project to constitute a ‘people’ who make up a collective singularity, however internally diverse, by virtue of perceived affinity, territorial co-presence and sense of connection to a common, coherent and evident historical story from which moral lessons can and have been learned (see also Eder, 2014). A significant paradox within this – one that is, for the moment, probably insoluble – is the tension between different dimensions of collectivity and belonging, and in particular the difficulty of balancing national and trans- or supranational belongings, of feeling oneself simultaneously a national and a European citizen (Giddens, 2014, p. 151; Sierp, 2014; Guibernau, 2007, pp. 92, 113). Belonging, we suggest, is a kind of *meta-dimension* of European heritage. As Montserrat Guibernau argues, belonging to a collectivity gives life meaning; it ‘offers a vantage point from which human beings are able to transcend their limited existence by sharing some common interests, objectives and characteristics with fellow-members’, and can be an antidote to alienation (Guibernau, 2013, pp. 2, 4). As we have seen in this book, the construction or sense of a shared heritage is entangled with affirmations of belonging at the level of rhetoric and policy. But what happens at the level of practice? What happens when heritage is involved in refusals of belonging, or when belonging is tacitly or overtly denied to some people? This final chapter takes up these questions, mining some of our ethnographies for support. One of these is the basis for a short diversion to a Turkish coffeehouse in what used to be the edge of West Berlin. This is a marginal story that turns out to be central, allowing us to suggest that among the multiple Europes circulating and bickering

in the air around us, there are still some others yet to be brought into sight. After this, we close the book with some practical comments about what, in this time of perceived crisis, should be done to re-orient ideas of the European past at the level of heritage practice.

### **Belonging to the past**

Heritage and belonging go back a long way. As Pierre Nora explains, heritage traditionally referred to ‘goods and properties you inherited from your father or your mother’ (Nora, 2011, p. ix); today, it refers to the ‘goods and properties of a group which help define the identity of that group’. But, Nora argues, the meaning of heritage has been enormously extended, in fact, since we ‘readily speak today of a linguistic, cultural or genetic heritage’ (Nora, 2011, p. ix) giving us a range of possibilities and indices for constructions of belonging. Belonging brings its connotations of ownership of heritage, as Nora’s comment suggests, along with an inverse sense of being owned *by* one’s heritage, or ‘belonging to’ places, peoples, historical narratives or mixtures of these. This also returns us to the idea of *disinheritance* (Tunbridge and Ashworth, 1996), which is to say that assertions relating to group heritage necessarily alienate others. As senses of belonging are made, so too are senses of non-belonging.

In one of its dictionary definitions, ‘to belong’ is to be ‘rightly assigned to a specified category’ – a phrase full of constructive problems: why are there categories, and who specifies them? Who can ‘assign’ something or someone to a category? And on what basis do we understand that such assignment might be right or wrong? Another dictionary definition of ‘belonging’ is to ‘have the right personal or social qualities to be a member of a particular group’. But what group (more fundamentally, why groups at all?), which qualities and why right or wrong? As discussed in Chapter 1, in 2016 Hungarian premier Viktor Orbán exhorted citizens to vote for a ‘Zero Refugees’ policy by arguing that the alternative was to lose ‘our European values, our very identity, by degrees like the live frog allowing itself to be slowly cooked to death in a pan of water’, which was the discursive and defensive construction of an in-group and a threatening out-group, as much as it was a tactical mobilisation of Europeanness as a cover for an anti-EU position and what Orbán saw as a national interest.

Anthony Giddens’ notion of the ‘reflexive project of the self’ (1991) involves the suggestion that lapses in the weight upon our lives of tradition and customs mean that the self has to be created and recreated more actively. The self, in this view, is not essential or fixed but is a form of projection relying on arrays of possibilities, some of which may be found before our lives so long as they have sufficient publicity to be discoverable by us and some form of continuity can be construed (for example, ‘Viking’ has more publicity and positive connotations than ‘Norman’ in the UK, making it arguably a more available referent for identities). This search for meaning often relies on anchorings in the past, or in time-place-people formations, through which subjects can create narratives of

continuity and allay anxieties about identity that result from less stable social and cultural situations.

This is the ‘self-in-history’ that has been discussed at length in this book. One’s self-in-history is a strategic and elective construction of a historicised self, often based upon the precedence of one’s forebears with whom we feel we share something, whether it is blood, religion, politics, class or land occupancy. It is a matter of how – through what ‘cultural device’ as historian Geoffrey Cubitt (2007, p. 15) would call it – we ‘relate’ to the past and identify, perform and pattern it in our own contemporary personhood, whether in our appearance or in our interiorised practice of the self. The self-in-history is a sense of some kind of literal or psychic descendance and the inheritance that brings, whether it is an affective burden, a tactic of distinction and specialness, a justification for the adoption of characteristics or beliefs (including enmities) or a group belonging that provides meaning. The (chosen) past here is a reservoir of symbols whose ‘necessary ambiguity’ render them pliable for adoption and adaptation (Guibernau, 2013, p. 27).

Drawing lines between ourselves and the inhabitants of that foreign country that is the past (Lowenthal, 1985) is obviously a creative practice. It is, as it were, like a mental map in which we plot ourselves as part of historical time, with all of its jumps, elisions, gaps and wormholes. Such mapping involves specific historiographical liabilities, for it involves an attempt both to think oneself into the past and the past into oneself. It is to connect backwards, irrespective of the potential disconnections that distance us from our forebears, because our different situations may produce radically different forms of perception and consciousness from the inhabitants of the past with whom we identify (Cubitt, 2007; Watson 2015, p. 290). It also brings up the likelihood of our selective identifications with and remakings of the past, which has been a recurrent theme in this book. Nevertheless, it forms the basis for a compound sense of belonging to a historical community of the past, comprising both the dead and the living, and an overlapping memory community of the present. But to how many pasts, places and peoples can we belong?

### **A European self-in-history?**

For a cosmopolitan elite, a holding-together of national and European senses of belonging and identity may feel easy. It is the collapse of the us-them distinction into a soft binary, where ‘we’ can cover either a national or a European demos (‘we Germans’, ‘we Europeans’), depending on the context of an utterance. It is a ‘both-and’, rather than an ‘either-or’ position (Macdonald and Fausser, 2000). When we interviewed visitors at the House of European History (HEH) in Brussels in 2017 (shortly after its opening), many adopted this ‘both-and’ position, as one might expect on an assumption that a pro-EU audience self-selects in choosing to visit such a museum. In our questionnaire, some of our respondents chose to put ‘European’ ahead of their national identities in terms of personal significance.<sup>3</sup> Current political developments have meant that, in some quarters,

anti-EU sentiment has positively bolstered European identity (Delanty, 2018, p. 203), as in the case of the EU-flag-waving ‘Remainers’ who protested against Brexit in their tens of thousands in the streets of Westminster (Figure 10.1). In our time at HEH we also encountered people who had not really considered or championed their ‘European’ identities until political events like Brexit compelled them to do so. When do identity formations come into view? Anthony Giddens discusses Vaclav Havel’s meditation on the *timing* of European identity as a recent development in its conscious and reflexive form. It is recent because identifying ourselves is now and only now a pre-requisite for co-existing with others in a ‘multicultural and multipolar world’ (Havel in Giddens, 2014, p. 152). If European identity was largely unreflexive until recently it was, Havel argues, because Europe felt that it *was* the world, making identity superfluous. In other words, a new consciousness of otherness, of disparate positions and our



*Figure 10.1* ‘Remainers’ protesting against the Brexit referendum result in July 2016, Westminster, London

own contingent positions compels us to identify ourselves as a matter of emergency. It is part of a rescue version of what Richard Jenkins (2008, p. 5) calls the ‘multi-dimensional classification or mapping of the human world and our places in it, as individuals and as members of collectivities’ (Jenkins, 2008, p. 5).

But recent pro-EU sentiment and the ‘reflexive Europeanisation’ it often involves have of course also bolstered *nationalist* senses of self, amplifying European *and* national identity positions among respective groups and the antagonism between them dynamically. Indeed, for many citizens, the holding-together of national and European identities is a nonsense easily trumped by emotional attachments to the nation that are not transferable to the EU (Guibernau, 2007, p. 116). As it happens, not all of the HEH visitors whom we surveyed were ‘EUrophiles’. As one UK visitor noted:

I voted to leave [the EU], mainly because we can remember what it was like before we joined... We [British] made our own laws, and our own decisions about things, and we didn’t just, ‘Oh, it’s alright,’ you know, it’s everybody ... just too much of everybody. We don’t seem to have any ... we can’t seem to stop the amount of people, and the amount of changes, and everything coming into it. We are losing our identity, that’s what I wanted to say. Other countries seem to keep their identity a lot more, and we are keeping our identity, so I voted to come out.

(HEH1, pers. comms., 2017)

This is not merely a characteristic of UK debates. Denials of commonality and common heritage can also be found, for example, in the Europe of Freedom and Direct Democracy (EFDD) charter’s position that discrete national heritages should be strengthened, national borders protected and that ‘there is no such thing as a single European people’.<sup>4</sup> Likewise, Delanty (2018, p. 190) has argued against the uniqueness of Brexit, pointing out comparable nationalist sentiments in other European settings.

At the same time, the nation is hardly the only available dimension of collectivity; it fails too, sometimes marked by the attempted secession of regions, or people’s attempts to find in history, religion or other commonalities a shared identity and sense of belonging in place, time and society. In a sense, this is the quest for an alternative imagined community (Anderson, 1983). For some of our visitors, this manifested itself in a desire for a smaller, more centralised, less eastern or more northern European Union; other respondents surveyed elsewhere identified variously Nordic, Mediterranean, Viking, Celtic or class-based collectivities.

Heritage is one of the primary means through which senses of belonging are identified and constructed. Together, heritage and belonging are part of critical discursive formations that configure ideas of collectivity in Europe: who ‘belongs’ together, where and why; and who does not belong, and why not. What part do strategies of future-making and tactical framings and uses of heritage play in this? As seen in Chapter 3, the instruments that work to construct a

heritage demos are ‘soft’ ones. In one view, this is right and proper: hard instruments would be problematic, since the very heritage values that are promoted derive from the idea of counteracting a history of totalitarianism and, in other temporal moments and geographic regions, religious dogmatism imposed normatively and oppressively. However soft, the identification and transmission of a ‘European heritage’ has the potential to function as an irritant for some, as an imposition against which to react and posit a contrasting self-in-history. This is at its most obvious in the Brexit context, as with the visitor above who complains about the EU representing, or being made up of, ‘too much of everybody’.

Notwithstanding the urgency of thinking through European identities, in a number of cases our visitors had what could be called *functionalist* European identities that were relatively unreflexive, classing themselves as having European identities by dint, for example, of their faculty to travel freely in Europe, without particular historical consideration of where that particular ‘freedom’ came from and what it means at an ethico-political level. On the other hand, we found in our HEH research that many people do profoundly identify with typical, historically-rooted ‘European values’. Here is one of our respondents:

‘European’, first, is a region in the world where we share a lot of diversity. A very distinct cultural heritage. Not always without conflicts, but nevertheless, very deep. The feared reminiscences of wars of the past are always something that hold people together, even if they were on different sides. Being European today is a very distinct minority approach in the world, which is based on some common institutions, beliefs and procedures like rule of law, like democracy, like human rights; that deserve to be defended, maintained and hopefully improved; because not everything is great.

(HEH2, pers. com., 2017)

This sounds remarkably like the preamble to a European-level heritage instrument. Indeed, it may not surprise the reader to learn that the visitor in question (who was approached as part of a random sample) worked for the Council of the EU, although in a field unconnected to heritage issues. (Tellingly, his department was having a group outing to the museum, although participation was voluntary.)

A raft of heritage manifestos has made the same case, essentially trying to deepen the ideal of ‘unity in diversity’ into something grounded in both history and practice. For example, in 2007 the COE’s *European Manifesto for Multiple Cultural Affiliation* attempted to:

show how the feeling, on the part of certain individuals or groups, of belonging to several cultural traditions at the same time can be reconciled with a European citizenship now in the making, based on mutual recognition of different cultures and an attachment to shared values,

by highlighting ‘the mass of exchanges and the intermingling that has forged Europe’s culture’.<sup>5</sup> Just over ten years later, on the back of the 2018 European

Year of Cultural Heritage, the *Berlin Call to Action* was published, reiterating the centrality of heritage within European politics and echoing the familiar instrumental idea of heritage as a means of forging a positive narrative linking past and future:

Today, in this European Year of Cultural Heritage, we have a unique opportunity to influence the debate on the Future of Europe. Confronted with so many challenges, and even threats, to core European values, this debate cannot be based exclusively on political, economic or security considerations. We must ‘change the tone’ of the narrative about Europe. We must put our shared cultural heritage where it belongs: at the very centre of Europe’s policies and priorities.<sup>6</sup>

But if this identity positioning, or this collective self-in-history, is not common across the piece, and European heritage instruments continue to preach only to the choir or to go under the radar of general consciousness, then a European heritage is inherently liable to falter. Its success as a totalising discourse necessarily depends on its large-scale and comprehensive purchase. But that purchase is only ever likely to be partial because of the diversity of positions across nation-states and orders of memory, including disinvestments in European belonging or the failure of the EU to create an appropriate dimension of belonging for all. At the same time, the very urgency of manifestos such as the *Berlin Call to Action* was the increased purchase of right-wing populist uses of the past that are seen by many official heritage actors to be misleading, both in the sense of inaccuracy and of leading people down the wrong path. The response to these uses of the past is to make the case that cultural pluralism – the ‘diversity’ within the ‘unity’ – has a long and specific history. For example, the first of seven ‘rationales for action’ presented in the manifesto is:

Our cultural heritage is what makes us European as it reflects our varying and shared values, cultures and memories. Therefore, it is the true embodiment of Europe’s ‘Unity in Diversity’ and it helps us *resist divisive forces* which are a danger to our society.

(Our emphasis)<sup>7</sup>

Nevertheless, a number of challenges beset the identification of European heritage, alongside the ontological bind outlined at the beginning of the book wherein ‘Europe’ and ‘European heritage’ effectively rely on and validate one another. These challenges are: (i) whether it is really possible to claim that there is significant distinctiveness in European heritage to warrant its marking-out as a discrete entity (Lowenthal, 2004, p. 23; Giddens, 2014, pp. 150–152); (ii) whether it is predominantly endogenous and contained within Europe, and if not then how (on earth) can it be understood? (Delanty, 2018); and (iii) whether it is really possible to talk convincingly about a European shared past and a shared culture, when what divides Europeans may be more significant than what



unites them (Guibernau, 2007, 99–112). Finally (iv), what is that shared past? What does it contain and what has been silenced?

Meanwhile, it can feel like European-level heritage instruments discussed in Chapter 3 are also more generally applicable and are not inherently specific to Europe, whatever their Europeanising rhetoric. This is the case, for example, with the Faro Convention, the European Landscape Convention or with the European Heritage Label. The latter, although specific to Europe in the sense that it requires alignment with European historical concerns, in many ways resembles an adapted, more limited version of the UNESCO World Heritage List without the full universalist reach. Indeed, another manifesto produced in connection with EYCH (and in dialectical relations with the *Berlin Call to Action*), was *Fast Forward Heritage*, published by the heritage-sectoral, EU-funded group Culture Action Europe in 2018. This manifesto develops the concept of ‘European added value’ as a guiding principle both sidestepping the universalism of UNESCO and overcoming the insularity and introversion typical of the right-wing populist nationalisms that seemed to radically threaten the European project:

European added value is found primarily in cross-border cooperation, actions that address, reach and benefit the citizens of Europe, and enhance mutual knowledge of their cultures. In times of growing inequality and polarisation within Europe and beyond, actions funded in the field of cultural heritage should be carefully assessed to ensure their European added value for EU citizens as a whole. A strong commitment to European values should be explicitly inscribed in the policy legacy of the EYCH.<sup>8</sup>

One problem with all of these sentiments is how far they travel and what they actually do. Significant EU funding (some of which has led to this book) and great amounts of political and personal effort go into the project of identifying European heritage and making of it a force for good, while simultaneously taking the pulse of European collective solidarity. But our impression is that within wider *heritage practice* contexts there can be little knowledge of or attention to all of this work (although more research would be needed to evaluate this claim). We can recall, for example, the lack of traction of the EYCH 2018 Ringing for Peace event in the UK discussed in the last chapter. And since the instruments of heritage policy are soft ones, perhaps we are inevitably trammelled into situations of practice where ‘European heritage’ is simultaneously championed and ignored respectively by its adherents and ‘the rest’ across the heritage sector.

Nevertheless, in all of these positionings we see a need to deal with a particular sense of crisis that is very much of the present. As we have seen over the course of this book, crisis is a key catchword that can amplify itself, and there is disagreement about what the crises that affect us are, who is responsible and what are the causes or symptoms. While for some, crisis is caused by the imposition of difference (primarily through migration, whether from the EU or

outwith), for the authors of the sectoral manifestos noted above there is a crisis of *heritage itself*, where what is at stake is control over narratives and exerting power over the passions they provoke. This is a crisis because of the moment in which we find ourselves, when political actors do not always worry about truth and accuracy; when the past is bent to horribly uncivil purpose in the present through selective remembering; and when formative pasts of cultural exchange, exogenous influence or colonial wrongdoing are glossed or forgotten, as is the fact that the nation-state as a geopolitical formation is neither old (relatively speaking) nor ordained, and therefore might not need to be the default collectivity to which we attach our identities.

### Crisis talk

*This concept, Europe, will make the common foundation of our civilisation clear to all of us and create little by little a link similar to the one with which the nations were forged in the past.*

(Robert Schumann)

*In these times of crisis and these years of remembrance of the 1914–18 war, we must not forget that the European Union and the Euro have maintained solidarity between Europeans. A hundred years ago, nationalism and competition between nations led us to war.*

(Thierry Meeùs)

Both of these quotations preface the guidebook to Mini-Europe, a theme park in Brussels in which models of key European buildings are presented in a 1:25-scale miniaturised Europe (although this is Europe as the EU, for non-member states are absent). Alongside these quotations are portraits of and endorsements from high-profile contemporary EU politicians: Schulz, Tusk, Junker, Mogherini. Some of the models move: for example, you can see the Berlin Wall being constantly demolished by a tiny mechanical digger. Indeed, Mini-Europe seems to be on the fun and cheesy side of things – a tractable, ludic Europe where we can stride around landmarks like giants. Yet its framings in EU political agendas are explicit and its construction of European values from the past is hardly jocular. Here is the roll call: Democracy, Spirit of Adventure, Spirit of Enterprise, Technology, Culture and Influence, the Christian Heritage, Social Thinking, Secularism and Multiculturalism. These things – it is posited – made Europe and Europeans what they are, and need to be remembered ‘in these times of crisis’.

A sense that we are in crisis, as has been discussed, is often entangled with a kind of search for the self. Who are we? What firm lines can be drawn that help us to define our positions and make sense of disadvantage and social relations? To which pasts can we anchor ourselves, and what has gone wrong? As Delanty (2018, 196) argues, ‘it is in moments of crisis that identities are nurtured’. A range of other commentators on heritage have made links between crisis and

people's turns towards the past. Rodney Harrison, for example, discusses the 'unholy trilogy of heritage, threat and the perception of difference', arguing that the 'strongest notion of heritage will always emerge among those individuals and communities who feel their sense of identity and community is most threatened, and who seek to empower themselves to resist this process in some way'. This is as much, if not more, likely to be a majority construction than it is a minority one (Harrison, 2013, p. 164). Indeed, his argument is that in some cases majority groups have appropriated the tactics of minorities: claiming to have been deprived of rights and proper traditions, to be discriminated against, to have been abused unfairly (Harrison, 2013, p. 163). Thus they forge an aggressively mythologised self-in-history, opening up the possibility of claiming victimhood that in turn warrants xenophobic and potentially violent reprisals (see also Wetherell's discussion of Paul Gilroy's 2004 articulation of 'postcolonial melancholia': 2012, p. 7). The very privileging of 'diversity' and one's 'rights' to one's distinct culture in policy instruments (such as the 2001 UNESCO Universal Declaration on Cultural Diversity) is intended to accommodate acceptance of cultural pluralism, but can in some sense open the way for acts of differencing and antagonistic defensiveness. We might also take from Anthony Giddens (1991) to argue that when crises upset people's 'ontological security' the ordered past becomes a kind of haven from uncertainty (see also Jenkins, 2008, p. 48), which is one reason why questions of power and control over historical narratives are so pressing.

But again, what counts as crisis? In a cynical sense, all of this time spent and ink spilled about identities and histories at a time of 'European Crisis' might look like so much 'navel-gazing' in comparison with the plight of people in blighted regions of the global south and east. As journalist Jonathan Friedland put it, 'we've been too busy with the [Irish] backstop to notice the world', leading us to forget about 'warming oceans, war in Yemen, the fate of the Uighurs, Gaza...'<sup>9</sup> In some ways the 'European crisis' mooted at the beginning of this book is precisely one where things are not terminal, or rather (the sense is), not yet. The patient can still recover at this turning point, not so much at the political level of a sustainable union of nations, but at the level of endemic threat to people's lives. The crisis is one in whose effects are not – for most people – matters of life and death. We recognise that austerity poverty in Europe may have had deadly effects, and we must remember individual acts of deadly violence that can be linked to European crises, such as the Oslo and Utøya massacre of 2011; the murders of UK MP Jo Cox in 2016 and Mayor of Gdańsk Paweł Adamowicz in 2019; and the possibility of a return to the Troubles in Ireland and Northern Ireland, heralded by the failed Derry bomb attack of 20 January 2019, that was arguably abetted by the hard border problem created by Brexit. But these horrors are not (yet?) widescale.

A *crisis* is a time of 'intense difficulty and danger' as the Oxford English Dictionary puts it, where a 'critical situation or problem' has 'the potential to become disastrous'. But there are other layered meanings to the word. In the past, 'crisis' was used for moments when stark alternatives came into view – right or



Figure 10.2 Monument to the Women in World War II, Whitehall, London, with an ephemeral memorial to MP Jo Cox, murdered as she campaigned for a Remain vote by an extreme right-wing terrorist in the name of British independence from Europe.

wrong, salvation or damnation, life or death, where one thing or another would come to pass (Koselleck, 2006). Crisis is, in this sense, a crucial point, a crossing from one condition to another. This is a time of European crisis only insofar as there is still space to turn to the past for reference, in which a long-term political future is still debated, and in which horror and deadly violence have not wiped from the mind any possibility of reflexivity and reflection. It is a crisis, in other words, where identity plays can still happen, and the anxieties voiced by commentators about the incipient dangers of forgetting, and slipping into a modern rerunning of the 1930s (e.g. Sands, 2017; cf. Levi and Rothberg 2018), are still just forebodings. Anything more than this would be to move beyond crisis into catastrophe.

## Belonging and the hidden heritages of Europe

*We used to throw stones at the Russian soldiers manning the Wall!*

(K1, pers. comm., 2018)

*We are in the 60th anniversary of the Turkish immigration and it is important to maintain our values from the homeland. We are making an effort to keep our culture alive. Think of the obligation<sup>10</sup> that was entrusted to us when the [Turkish] Republic was established.... When we look at the young generations here they enjoy rap music with swearwords. They have become more European, because three generations [of the Turkish community in Germany] have passed. Today's youth grow up like Germans. That's what Europeans want to do over time: make us forget Turkishness and integrate to Europe. However, as a matter of fact, you are a foreigner for Europe.*

(K2, pers. comm., 2018)

Here we are in a typically Turkish coffeehouse, or *kahvehane*. But we are in Berlin. The coffeehouse is in many senses an unofficial heritage site, or a site of heritage. Traditions are observed, but without any particular rituals. Customers – all male – pass the time by chatting, watching football, drinking Turkish tea and playing okey or backgammon (both games, as it happens, with complex, global cultural histories of their own). Our respondents – speaking in Turkish<sup>11</sup> – reflect on their identities, on citizenship and on their past in Berlin. They, or their parents, came here as ‘guest workers’ after the Bilateral Agreement of 1961 between Germany and Turkey, to service the post-war German Economic Miracle (*Wirtschaftswunder*) and to make up for the labour force lost to West Germany after the building of the Berlin Wall in the same year. The neighbourhood of Kreuzberg became an edge place, butting up against the Wall: a margin where the guest workers were settled as a marginal and (it was thought) temporary community. Now it is a fast-gentrifying central location.



Figure 10.3 Café Wrangel in Kreuzberg, Berlin, a heritage site of sorts, where we conducted interviews with Turkish former guest workers about negotiating identity and belonging in Germany.

The Turks were not the only guest workers: southern Italians, Moroccans, Tunisians, Greeks and others all worked in West German mines or the factories of Daimler-Benz. But it is the large Turkish population that has been at the invisible centre of a lost history of Europe. In his 1975 book *A Seventh Man* with photographer Jean Mohr, John Berger recognised in the experience and position of the migrant worker (what ‘surrounds him’ both ‘physically and historically’) the ‘political reality of the world at this moment’ expressed in a European story of capitalist modernity based on the unheeding exploitation of others. ‘The migrant is not on the margin of modern experience – he is absolutely central to it’ (Berger and Mohr, 2010 [1975]). Berger’s point can be extended: Europe has come to be as it is, *because* of the invisible migrant labour which is a fundamental part of its making.

In another sense about European ‘centrality’, the first of the two quotations above, where one of our respondents recalls how he and his friends would ‘throw stones at the Russians’, shows the connection of the Turkish guest-worker community to cardinal stories and monuments of the European heritage record such as the Berlin Wall. It is paradoxical that they were situated next to such an icon of European history – one that we even find in the Mini-Europe theme park – yet are so invisible in that heritage record. But neither of these facts is coincidental. In the 2010 re-edition of *A Seventh Man*, Berger and Mohr recall their surprise that their book was ignored in Europe upon its first publication (2010, p. 8). In a similar way, the European post-war pasts of economic migration and international pacts, and the global economic inequalities upon which they were

based, were largely lost to the heritage record. But perhaps European heritage depends upon its silences. We can argue, alongside Gurminder K. Bhambra's meditation on imperial forgetting (Chapter 8, this volume), that to say that 'multiculturalism has failed' in such a context is nothing less than a category error, for the state and the international order of which Europe is part are *made* of this multiculturalism. And yet, as the second of the two quotations above suggests, this misrecognition of European history involves persistent acts of differencing in the present, meaning that some cannot belong, and are disinherited from the very present that their presence made possible (see Mandel, 2008 for a provocative multidirectional analysis of xenophobia towards Turks in Germany). This is not the story of the 'Turks in Europe', as if they were a superficial and alien presence. Rather, this *is* the story of Europe. One of our interviewees at the Berlin Wall Memorial – a young Moroccan who had been raised in Germany – put this in other terms when talking about the heritage record:

For example, Turkish people back in the '60s I think when they used to work here, and their history has not really been told in the schools, or you know, I hear it from my friend's family or like, I know there were black people, African people that came here as well in the war fighting. They are not really included in history as well. So, you only hear that kind of stuff, you know, from people that, families, and, like, other people. But in school you only learn about what happened in the, you know, the Cold War and when Hitler was, you know, ruling over Germany, but that's the only history I really learned in school when I used to be here, when I was little.

(BW1, pers. comm., 2017, Anonymised)

The history of the War casts a long shadow over such pasts, and yet in another view the failure of multiculturalism or the rhetoric of PEGIDA are inextricably connected to that same War and its aftermath of division, reconstruction and the reckonings with multiculturalism that come now, under the banner of crisis.

In 2018, former British Museum director Neil MacGregor interviewed Humboldt Forum Director Hartmut Dorgerloh for his BBC Radio 4 series *As Others See Us*, which explored attitudes to the UK from overseas. The interview touched upon the politics of Brexit. Dorgerloh commented: 'I think the British are mourning; thinking that the past was better.' This, he said, explained their desire to be independent from Europe and to leave the EU. But 'in Germany, it's the complete opposite'. Such an impulse to separate and to isolate oneself, to turn down a chance of transnational collectivity, would be inconceivable. Germany *has* to be part of a collectivised Europe.

But which one? In fact, it is, once more, the certain Europe of the Negative Founding Myth; it is an endogenous Europe produced within a dimension of difficult history. It is not the global, porous, mutable Europe of exogenous formation or of deep multiculturalism, which are so critical to identity contests in Europe and to dissonant selves-in-history in the present. Our talks in the Kreuzberg *kahvehane* show us that other Europes are possible and other heritages can be

glimpsed, but only when we look again and see past, or against the grain of, the dominant backstories of the European present.

## **Towards new dimensions of heritage and memory? Suggestions for practice**

*Europe is like an old clock, you see – tick tock! It has always been the same since the... how would you say it in English? The Treaty, to have a conflict between different countries: the Treaty of Verdun in 843 between the three grandchildren of Charlemagne. You have always these two extremities of national identity and this dream of Europe.*

(HEH3, pers. comm., 2017)

This book has argued through multiple contributions that heritage, as the symbolic and inherently political valorisation of the past for the present and future, is a highly significant dimension of political organisation and cultural life in Europe, but with different meanings for different groups. It is far from being a simple part of our leisure time and economies and needs to be understood as a critical element within key social and political debates. As we have seen, at official levels in European instrumental policy, heritage has often been used as a resource for collective identity, pride and sense of belonging as well as for place regeneration and the development of tourism potentials and economies. But heritage is also manifest in people's everyday practices and beliefs. It is at work in political mobilisations that sometimes counter official ideas of peaceful collectivity. In these forms – for example in uses of the past in populist party-political or xenophobic discourses – it may instead reinforce senses of division and difference between groups.

The European past itself is complex, and characterised as much by multiplicity, the mobility of people and ideas, external influence, conflict and dissonance as it is by shared values, cultures and peace. It cannot be rewritten as a harmonious and unified history that has produced a stable and singular European identity, and attempts to do this have had and will likely continue to have only patchy success. Although a range of official instruments promote a coherent narrative of Europe, these often have little lasting purchase beyond the sphere of policy. They also fail to unify the plethora of different pasts from which people draw in order to frame both their identities and their preferred futures. By the same token, our research has shown that people's historical, political and geographical understandings of Europe differ markedly, as do people's attachments to different pasts and their desires about Europe's future. In many ways, and at many different levels, from the informal spaces of people's lives to public space and the sphere of policy, there are different 'Europes' being made all the time, through multiple dimensions of heritage and memory, and these sometimes come into antagonistic and even violent relationships. The chances of a widespread European collectivity that is both based on a shared history and respectful of



difference appear remote unless there is a change in orientation in heritage policy and practice.

This is not distinct from the political crisis of Europe in which, according to some, 'Europe as an idea is falling apart before our eyes.' In January 2019, 30 public intellectuals fronted by Bernard-Henri Lévy, Milan Kundera, Salman Rushdie, Elfriede Jelinek and Orhan Pamuk wrote a manifesto against the 'wreckers', or 'false prophets who are drunk on resentment and delirious at their opportunity to seize the limelight'. As they put it, 'three-quarters of a century after the defeat of fascism and 30 years after the fall of the Berlin Wall there is a new battle for civilisation'. Their response was to reassert their faith in the 'great idea' of a Europe of peace that can 'ward off the new signs of totalitarianism that drag in their wake the old miseries of the dark ages' and to promote a 'spirit of activism' capable of overcoming resentment, hatred and the hijacking of history.<sup>12</sup> If such activism were to articulate heritage practice it might well run the risk of looking like another instance of EU instrumentalism, with the inherent likelihood of provoking contrary activism. Subtler, more questioning, genealogical and dialogical activism may help: how has the present come to be? What are the historical and genealogical roots of and pathways to conflict and contest in the present? Why are there dissonances and silences? What pasts underpin the unequal conditions of belonging and the effects of crisis?

Heritage professionals are, we think, well aware of the social and political dynamics that inform audience engagements with the past. Many have a sophisticated sense of responsibility about managing the past in the present. They seek to achieve difficult balances, working with institutional missions to appeal to publics and communicate well, combined with the need to subsist in a visitor economy, meaning that they seek to capitalise on audiences' interests in the past. Simultaneously, they recognise that what people want from the past may have political liabilities in the present. In some cases, this leads to anodyne presentations of the past in which its controversial dimensions or contemporary political relevance goes unexplored. There is an untapped potential to exploit key heritage phenomena (sites, materials, narratives, symbols, monuments) as ways of tracing the histories of, and engaging with, contemporary social and political issues. Many museums and heritage sites do a good job of representing diversity, inequalities and plural perspectives. But this can be hard to do: on a tour of the newly-opened House of European History one of the chief curators commented that a key problem was the orchestration of a balanced history of Europe, attending also to national histories; and yet we learned from her that when taking around national-level officials they occasionally complained about the relative lack of exposure in the museum of their countries, as if in competition with others for a place in the European heritage record. At the same time, the museum takes a questioning approach, asking, 'Is there a shared European past?' And yet some visitors are not persuaded by such attempts at balance or interrogative rather than declarative approaches. A colleague of one of the current authors, upon return from Brussels, called the museum 'blatant propaganda'.

Perhaps there are ways through this. Canonic histories of Europe – notwithstanding their importance and value – need to be revisited and alternative formations explored. One reason for this is to increase the textures, richness and depths of the European heritage produced by and represented through official and institutional practice. Explorations of the ‘crossings’ of people and peoples, cultures, technologies, religions, ways of life across land, waterways, public and private spaces have already been experimented by some museums and sites, and their further refinement has the potential to counter views of European culture and identity as fixed, rooted and essential. An added dimension of this is to see Europe not as boundaried, territorial and static, but rather as never limited to itself; constantly in formation and subject to external influence; as transactional and made as much of vicissitude, movements and encounters as it is of purpose and tracts of land and sea. Europe and its locales might be conceived as both sites where cultural trajectories intersect and the origin points of global outgoings, and for this to happen cross-border collaboration of the kind suggested in the concept of European Added Value, discussed above, would surely help. So too would extra-European collaborations to explore the complex global positioning and making of Europe in the world. This chapter, as well as Chapter 8, has also shown that heritage discourse and practice are implicated in misrecognitions of Europe’s diversity in relation to groups who are positioned as outsiders by their immigrant status, rather than as integral to the very formation of Europe. It is also worth pointing out that there are other silences in the European heritage record, most notably pertaining to gender. As editors of this book, we realised at different points of the writing process how gender – particularly relating to the positions, positioning and experiences of women in European history – is hard to find or downright silenced (except in a few instances such as the Women’s Museum in Aarhus, Denmark), in favour of a tacitly masculinised heritage. This is another fundamental discrepancy that should prompt a holistic re-framing of European heritage representations.

While certain key conflicts (such as the World Wars of the twentieth century) have canonic status in heritage productions, it is important to diversify *conflict* as a paradigm of European history and to provide perspectives on less monolithic, non-military conflicts, including those that range over civil, moral spiritual, social, cultural, intercultural and gender issues. A key approach here is to see conflict and contest as a habitual recurrence rather than as an aberration before resolution, reconciliation and closure. The civil benefit of this approach in the present is to provide anchor points for the understanding of contemporary conflicts and to provide opportunities to contrast them historically, potentially defusing or tempering responses to contemporary crises as unprecedented and unique, while problematising any view of Europe (or its locales) as once-pure places subsequently contaminated by difference. Europe, in a realist view, contains divided memories and is made of difference, and at the political and civil level we suggest that this is not material to be harmonised or erased from history. A more proper civil project is to work to acknowledge, recognise and in some

way process division – not to ‘resolve’ it – so that it becomes an accepted fact in a situation of peaceful and respectful group relations. Rather than a demos based on a fictional history of eventual congruence, this is one that has a shared history of crossings and conflicts over a range of issues and interests. This seems deeply paradoxical – that division might be the grounds for commonality – but increased attention to the nature, historical depth and effects of difference, the idea of Europe as a ‘cultural space of difference’ may nevertheless offer opportunities for historical reflection and awareness upon which more plural senses of belonging can be based.

Just such an approach featured in the recent ‘Welcome to Jerusalem’ exhibition at the Jewish Museum Berlin, where multiperspectival contests and contrasts are offered up that do not smooth out difficulties or blandly pose a future where they magically dissipate. Of course, such an exhibition has deep resonance in Berlin and in ‘European space’ more generally, but undertaking such a genealogy of conflict in a more obviously European frame may open up considerable insights and possibilities for social and political engagement on the part of audiences. If the past is contested, then let us make of those contests an object of attention for audiences, such that contest itself becomes heritage. This is, in a sense, a lateral interpretation of the Faro Convention’s insistence that the importance of heritage lies not so much in materials of the past but in the ‘meanings and uses that people attach to them’<sup>13</sup> and to propose that such meanings should be gathered, juxtaposed and presented as artefacts of a history of the present.

Heritage practitioners are under pressure to manage the past in the present both within a tourist economy and with regard to a political context of instrumentalism, whether by government institutions or party politics. One feature of heritage practice is a tendency to segregate the past from the present, understanding it as concluded and therefore amenable to exhibition in museums or public remembering. An alternative perspective suggests that the past does not finish and runs into the present, and that even where a past seems remote, its meanings in the present are subject to continuous mutation and symbolic investment, including at the political level. The potential exists for heritage initiatives and museums to work creatively with a ‘past-in-present’ approach, seeking to unpick historical strands of contemporary phenomena, bringing historical narratives to bear on today’s concerns and asking questions about relationships between past and present, in order to encourage audiences to engage reflexively and critically with their own understandings of, and assumptions about, the past and its connections to the present. Crucially, heritage policy needs to find ways that are both soft and effective to make all of this happen. No amount of rhetoric will work or reset the gears of heritage practice without significant financial investment, as the viable alternative to hard instruments that still recognises the centrality of heritage in political, public and private spheres. Another key difficulty here is that heritage is not and cannot be contained within museums and heritage sites, which themselves attract a demographically limited audience. It circulates forcibly and

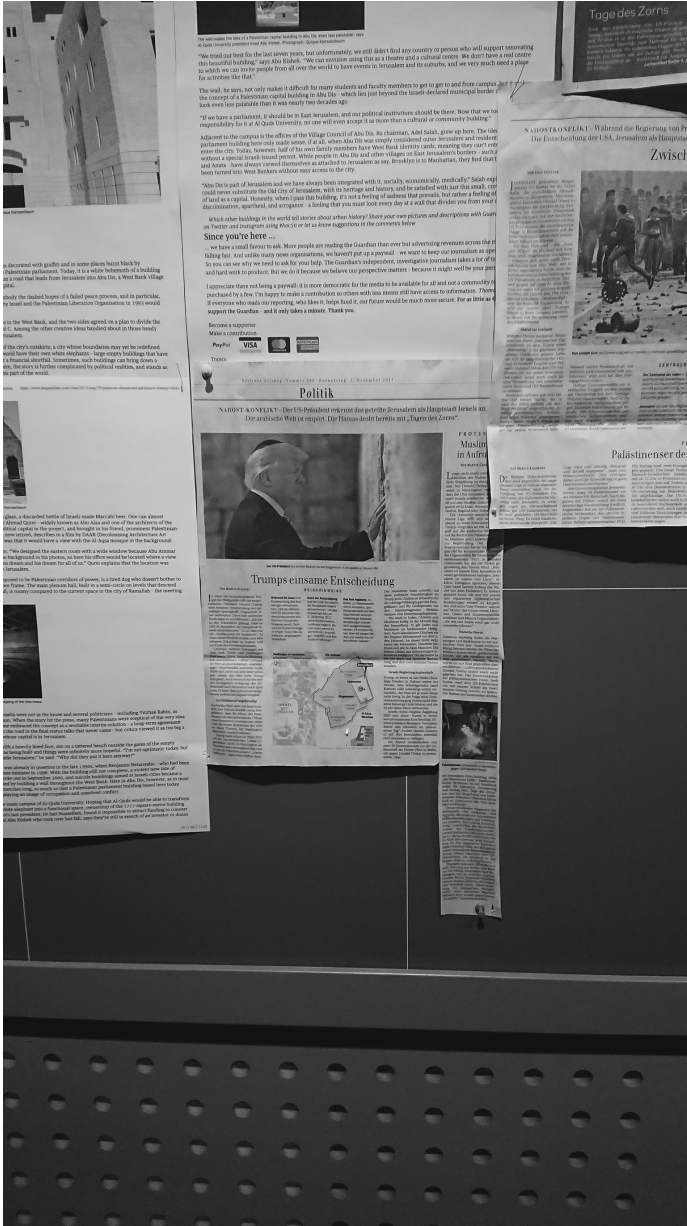


Figure 10.4 At the Jewish Museum Berlin, the *Welcome to Jerusalem* exhibition of 2018 explored the histories of the city, intermixed with different, conflicting perspectives from inhabitants in the present and discussion of ongoing controversies (including the US decision to move its Embassy to Israel from Tel Aviv to Jerusalem).

productively through dimensions and through mediations of many kinds, including relatively uncontrollable ones like social media (see Galani, Mason and Arrigoni 2019 for an overview). How then might soft heritage policy have good effect outside of the walls and fences of official heritage? This is a question for future research.

The entanglement of heritage in both the politics of togetherness and the politics of division needs to be recognised by contemporary heritage policy and practice. The purpose of this is not to eradicate the political dimensions of heritage, which would be impossible because the very nature of heritage is political. Rather, it is to encourage people to develop more complex understandings of the European past, liable to counteract exclusive, xenophobic and antagonistic uses of it. It is also necessary to recognise that heritage practice is not, and cannot be, neutral. Ethical and political questions necessarily attach to heritage. The promotion of peaceful civil relations based upon the idea that there may be some common heritages is a social good; but at the same time heritage can be divisive and used by actors to create or exacerbate contemporary social cleavages. We ignore this at the peril of constructing fictional heritages and mythic closures, blinding out historical connections that would help us to make sense of life and circumstance in the present. We now need a new orientation for European heritage, which is to recognise and address historical situations of division, contest, conflict and exchange as formative of the richness of European cultures today.

## Notes

- 1 This chapter is available open access as part of the European Union-funded Horizon 2020 research project: CoHERE (Critical Heritages: performing and representing identities in Europe). CoHERE received funding from the European Union's Horizon 2020 research and innovation programme under grant agreement no. 693289.
- 2 [www.quora.com/Why-cant-all-the-countries-see-that-a-lot-of-refugees-dont-belong-in-Europe](https://www.quora.com/Why-cant-all-the-countries-see-that-a-lot-of-refugees-dont-belong-in-Europe)
- 3 Our random sample of 36 interviews was not intended to be representative of the general visitor population.
- 4 [www.efdgroupp.eu/](http://www.efdgroupp.eu/)
- 5 <https://rm.coe.int/16806abde8>
- 6 [www.europanostra.org/our-work/campaigns/berlin-call-action/](http://www.europanostra.org/our-work/campaigns/berlin-call-action/)
- 7 [www.europanostra.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/09/Berlin-Call-Action-Eng.pdf](http://www.europanostra.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/09/Berlin-Call-Action-Eng.pdf)
- 8 <https://cultureactioneurope.org/advocacy/fast-forward-heritage/>
- 9 [www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2019/jan/18/brexit-climate-change-yemen-gaza-irish-backstop](http://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2019/jan/18/brexit-climate-change-yemen-gaza-irish-backstop)
- 10 'Flag' (*Bayrak*), the connotation of which in Turkish here is of an ethico-political compact transmitted by Atatürk to the Turkish people upon the founding of the Turkish Republic in 1923.
- 11 Our translations.
- 12 [www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2019/jan/25/fight-europe-wreckers-patriots-nationalist](http://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2019/jan/25/fight-europe-wreckers-patriots-nationalist)
- 13 [www.coe.int/en/web/culture-and-heritage/faro-convention](http://www.coe.int/en/web/culture-and-heritage/faro-convention)

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