



Cultural Base

Social Platform
on Cultural Heritage
and European Identities

Uses of Heritage

Vision Document
(cultural memory axis)

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Abstract

Current uses of heritage are, first of all, part of a logic of reshaping local territories: starting from the nations in favor of the metropolis. Furthermore, they are showing challenges to the traditional administrative articulations by encouraging a concentration on communication and on international visibility through branding strategies – namely, the branding of heritage.

Current Context

In the middle of the 90s, David Lowenthal could write: “Heritage is a most compelling modern cause. In the last quarter century it has expanded from a small elite pastime to a major popular crusade. Everything bears the marks of the cult of heritage”¹. This started during the 1970s, twenty years before, and in the 90’s it was near to its apogee. Nearly simultaneously, **European building process was maintaining a complex relation with its heritage. On one hand, through the elaboration of common symbols – a flag, a currency... - Europe seemed to chose to move away from any precise heritage characterization and from any localized reference** which could reflect a certain country, a certain culture, either religious or political one, or a certain tradition, in brief, a certain memory. Abstract figures of the “monuments” which are on the bank bills of the euro, are one of the examples of this issue. Observing these representations, a single currency seems like it is rejecting the history in the traditional sense, as testimonies of cultures, in order to evoke an abstract monetary sign. The difference thereof is striking when it comes to other European countries which have preserved the heritage symbols on their national currencies, as it is a case with Switzerland, which is continuing its praise by representing the great men or women on its bills.

¹ David Lowenthal, *Possessed by the past: The heritage crusade and the spoils of history*. Free Press, 1996.



On the other hand, Europe was supposed to know how, if not to govern, at least to coordinate, or even to motivate the initiatives of the heritage conservation, to reward good organization of pilot or model museums, in brief, to give a framework for good principles and for recognition of the traditional national heritage initiatives. The idea of European heritage seemed to undertake a mission to provide a cultural identity that is relatively stable and consensual for a structure that was, up to this point, mainly economic (industrial and oriented to market), with political aspects still remaining uncertain.

The Council of Europe has undertaken different operations after the fall of the Wall and particularly from the middle of the 1990s, an incentive politics of stock-taking, animation, conservation and planning, as well as preservation and valorization. It was in this particular context that numerous conventions for the protection of heritage were adopted and a certain number of prominent initiatives undertaken, including the organization of European architectural heritage year in 1975 (with a title *A future for our past*), which was commemorated recently in nearly every country as a milestone of European heritagization. Finally, the program of European cultural routes launched in 1987 by the Council of Europe, in order to “invite Europeans to travel across and explore the pathways where the European identity was created” had to designate “not only the real routes, but the symbol of a cultural cooperation process as well” between 41 signatories of the European cultural convention, local and regional authorities and the civil society in the spirit of the Vienna summit of 1993. **Recommendations, resolutions and other charters, proceeding from the Council of Europe, established gradually as many references for the continent;** campaign “Europe, a common heritage”, launched in 2000, was intended to celebrate the 50th anniversary of the Council.

Simultaneously, the Council of Europe regularly organized exhibitions with highly diverse themes, some of which represented the important phases of raising awareness of heritage, alongside with rediscoveries of taste and reorientations of art history. We could say that this is a question of renewal, in broad terms, of the national models of heritage protection and valorization, with, for example, the European Heritage Label imagined in 2005, after an enlargement of the Union, including ten additional countries from 2004. There is in fact an evidence of the tendency for a proper labeling of expertise: the presentation of the European award for the museum of the year, with a recognition of a particular museography, represents this tradition, taken officially from a private initiative by Kenneth



Hudson (consult the report *Museum and European heritage, a treasure or a tool?* Salzburg, 1990). The network of experts-volunteers of the European award outlines, with the others, a nebula of the actors and of the scholar and activist references for the contemporary museums.

The production of knowledge about heritage is characteristic of these decades. The common assessment was that of a heritage as "a form of ethnological perception" (Pierre Nora, 1997). For **we witnessed a tireless renewal of heritages, answering a protean desire of (re)invention or new interpretation of archives, memories, traditions, a quest and a general preference for the "roots". Along with the development of more and more complex intervention principles, this movement engaged an ethical and political reflection upon the production of heritage.** But in 2010, a first bilan of previous initiatives, especially of the program of Capitals of Culture initiated in the mid-1980's, by the Commission was clearly disappointed: "A lot of past Capitals have ... struggled with the European dimension of the event and there was considerable discussion on whether it should be further defined ... In some cases the cities did in fact have a good European dimension in their projects, but did not make it visible enough in their communication material"².

In front of the diverging definitions of EH by the states, the European Parliament decided to allow the intervention of the EU in the EHL, "to enhance the value and profile of sites which have played a key role in the history and building of the EU" (such as the house of Robert Schuman). The uses of the heritage of Europeanization are also visible with the archives of the building of Europe, linked at Florence with the European University Institute and a chair of the History of the Building of Europe. It is a kind of a new European heritage. It is dubious it will appeal to cultural imagination of wider audiences: it will probably instead remain in the next decades an exclusive asset of elitist custodians - even through the interpretative center of Brussels in the European Parliament. So the European

² European Commission (2010) Summary of the European Commission Conference 'Celebrating 25 Years of European Capitals of Culture'. Brussels, 23–24 March, p. 6. See Nicole L. Immler and Hans Sakkers, "(Re) Programming Europe: European Capitals of Culture: rethinking the role of culture." *Journal of European Studies* 44.1 (2014): 3-29, and Corina Tursie, "Re-Inventing the Centre-periphery Relation by the European Capitals of Culture. Case-studies: Marseille-Provence 2013 and Pecs 2010." *Eurolimes* 19 (2015).



heritage cannot be put on a supranational scale alternatively to heritage promoted by the nation-state. **It seems clear that Europe cannot produce uses of heritage that would surpass “from above” the national uses.**

Instead, the idea of the free circulation of national treasures of Europe represented *a priori* a key element in the potential construction of a common European space. But, in the negotiations of the 1980s opposition could be seen between countries that pleaded the principle of free circulation of “national treasures”, like the United Kingdom, Holland and Belgium, and the ones that defended the requirement for interventions³. We can wonder if the statement of the Commission of European communities from 1982 is today true, saying that “traditional notion of ‘national heritage’ [...] should be [...] gradually expended [...] towards a new notion of ‘community heritage’, which would reflect the fact that the departure of the [part of this heritage] to another country of the Community will be less and less felt as an impoverishment of the native country”.

Certainly, several examples could testify about this fact, as the sharing of two Rembrandt’s paintings between the Louvre and Rijksmuseum, after accompanying vicissitudes: “Two canvases will always be displayed together, alternatively, in the two most famous and visited museums in Europe, Rijksmuseum and Louvre”. The new technologies could, in any case, allow the circulation of the “intangible” of European heritage in the future. A certain number of agreements concerning European cultural heritage were promoted by the European Commission in order to make European cultures present and accessible on the Internet. Eventually, the Faro Convention of the 27th of October 2005 wanted to place at the forefront the relation which communities maintained with heritage.

But the current situation in Europe brings up the focus on national, evokes the strengthening of the public authorities, in the general context of a (economic, institutional and safety) crisis, which is leading towards reinforcing the influence of the central states through setting up the

³This was the result of different national laws, see Uta Protz, *"National treasures" / "Trésors Nationaux": The control of the export of works of art and the construction of 'National Heritage' / 'Patrimoine' in France and the United Kingdom, 1884-1959*, Phd, Florence : European University Institute, 2009



regulations and increased control. The emblematic heritage of the national territorial identity could, therefore, turn to certain "orthodoxy". In the context of the financial crisis of the States, unlimited protection of heritages, multiplied and democratized through their different incarnations, beyond the "monumentality" typical for the 19th century, seems to be threatened. Monuments should be chosen for protection, particularly since migration seems to endanger imagined communities which are supporting conservations of the traditional monuments – churches, castles, etc. **Finally, the impact of tourism on world economy provokes the rivalry between eminent national museums as far as the flow of visitors is concerned, which are competing for the parts of the market** through different campaigns, supported by their governments, as it was the case with the british GREAT tourism campaign in 2014-2015.

Summarizing

Europe, as economic and political construction, did not care so much about heritage at its beginning, leaving responsibilities in the matter to different nation states. The Council of Europe, like different institutions as well, tried to outline a certain form of initiatives coordination rather than a policy, particularly among museums, in order to provoke the opening of special European exhibitions. This mobilization of collections and of heritages was part of the cold war context, like it was the case with big American "universal" exhibitions like *The Family of Man* (MoMa, 1955), or with the American participation to Venice Biennale of art. The birth of a new heritage of contemporary monuments was supposedly linked to new values, and driven by a peaceful transnational future: "monuments in Germany are different from monuments in other countries" after World War II, because they are future-directed, forward-looking "Mahnungen" (warnings)⁴.

Europe found itself confronted to a highly unexpected trend of heritages during the 1980s, and European commission started as well to equip itself with the *lieux de mémoire* related to the European constitution. But the context was marked by the revival of patriotic, if not chauvinistic, themes, like it was the case with English heritage during the Falklands war, rightly criticized by English Marxist intellectuals as manipulation and "invention of tradition". On the other hand, the war in

⁴ Neil MacGregor, *Germany: Memories of a Nation*. Knopf, 2015, p. Xxv, Xxviii and 561.



Yougoslavia after the dissolution of communist countries showed that the “hate of monuments” (as they marked territories) could accompany, or even nourish and stimulate ethnic cleansing and extermination of populations⁵.

Europe is suddenly concerned to invent a set of uses for generally mono-national monuments which used national-religious characteristics, to control their potential manipulations, getting back to the words of Paul Valéry related to uses of the past as a dreadful chemistry and to the anxieties of the 1930's according to some commentators⁶. Finally **the subject of immigration questioned as well the appropriation of European heritages by new Europeans, and among some historians and theoreticians of Heritage it nourished a theory of menace which could influence the maintenance and transmission of heritages** in the future⁷. Thus the fear of failure of transmission of heritages – whether religious or of monuments – which is currently nourishing political and cultural debates among numerous European countries, mobilizing, therefore, heritage for a context and for purposes up to now unknown.

Challenge 1: The European uses of the past are supposed to be the good heritage practice that could be a model within the mondialization of the norms: is it really the case?

In various forms, global initiatives tend to develop a new universal consciousness for a notion of heritage, which we know is an outcome of a particular occidental history, in its classical, post-Renaissance frame, but which diffusion we advocate in the framework of “global” measures, and in the name of skills that are indefinitely practical and reproducible. It is a question, as French expert Michel Parent explains, of “making the States agree with the notion of universality of the culture through the respect of specific cultures: each problem arises from the way an evidence of something that is at the same time absolute and intimately subjective,

⁵ François Chaslin, *Une haine monumentale: essai sur la destruction des villes en ex-Yougoslavie*, Paris, Descartes & Cie, 1997.

⁶ Paul Valéry, *Discours de l'Histoire prononcé à la distribution solennelle des prix du lycée Janson-de-Sailly*, 1932, *Regards sur le monde actuel [and] autres essais*, Paris, Gallimard, 1945.

⁷ Jean-Michel Leniaud, *Droit de cité pour le patrimoine*. Presses de l'université du Québec, 2013.



could be shared.” This planetary practice of heritage presumes a universal consensus and a system of norms and practices that can be considered as Eurocentric.

The doctrine that was gradually constructed regarding an ethics of heritage is largely placed under the auspices of the UNESCO and of international conventions, which by far exceed the European territory. The battle against the trafficking of works, stolen or illegally exported cultural goods, and more broadly the claims for restitution, largely exceed the European framework, however, not all European countries have signed it, or they have not recognized all principles, policies, standards, on the international scale. The patrimonial recompositions have to obey worldwide to the new ethics of cultural property. The recent international worry about the future of goods stolen from Jewish people during the Nazi occupation emerges in a certain way from this desire to audit the accounts according to contemporary ethics. Persons in charge of different museums have to explain in face of public opinion the politics followed regarding this matter, reexamine their collections, even return some objects. **There is no kind or heritage institution which is spared from the new ethical demands that concern the restitution, and European heritage is certainly very suspect in a post-colonial age of being unaware of such changes.**

Europe itself is divided within its own heritage space regarding the answers to give to various global challenges. The demand of restitution of the Parthenon Marbles bought by Lord Elgin, made by Greece, remains unanswered by the same institution, which proves that the concept of cultural property does not reach unanimity in its definitions nor in the consequences to draw from it. The director of the British Museum, Sir David Wilson, has in 1989, referring to the Benin bronzes belonging to his collection, raised the issue of “cultural responsibility” to reject the idea of restitution. Are certain European countries also authorised to position themselves as guardians, by vocation or by expertise, of a part of global heritage, against the opinion of the country of origin?

The argument of a better conservation of works in the museums of the North is still regularly used during this sort of debates. The publication in December 2002 of a manifesto in the form of a plea *pro domo* of a group of very large museums, that were all claiming themselves in terms of unique equality of the “universal museum” (*Declaration on the importance and value of universal museum on the*



British Museum website), marked a milestone in the attitude of museums to restitution claims, after various resolutions were voted or announced during the 1970s. For its promoters, this declaration was meant to emphasize the essential role played by these institutions in the quest of a better understanding of different civilizations, and in the promotion of what the new Quai Branly Museum coined as “the dialogue of cultures”. But this affirmation is strongly contested worldwide.

Challenge 2: The branding of the European heritage for tourism seems to be a necessity for most countries: is it a new way to deal with heritage?

Heritagization processes contribute to a logic of local territories and metropolis reshaping, and it is a part of challenging the traditional administrative articulations by encouraging a concentration on the communication and on international visibility.

Heritage is in danger of being managed in a utilitarian way with an aim to respond to a touristic demand. It is particularly the case with museums that are developing the notion of brand. In several European countries the public sector created agencies with the aim to support the policies related to the valorization of the intangible heritage of the State. This has been the case in France from 2006, with a specialized agency which defines the brands of the public entities in this way: “to protect and to develop its brand (or brands) is firstly [a tendency] to give a meaning, readability and visibility to its action. It is as well [a question] to provide an internal referential related to the values that constitute its identity, a strategic base which guarantees the coherence of totality of actions and discourses. It is, finally, for some public administrations and establishments that are facing increased competition, a way to confirm their identity and to highlight their advantages. Define, protect and increase the value of a brand could constitute an efficient lever for public service which is more efficient and more open towards expectations of citizens”⁸. The agency particularly indicated museums as especially apt to support cultural brands of the State. Implementation of branches inside or outside of Europe by certain institutions – which is the case with the Louvre in Abu Dhabi, could be an illustration of spreading of brands by museums. This movement could be perceived through other forms as well – in Italy through an appeal addressed in January 2015 to managers as the outcome of an international

⁸ <http://www.economie.gouv.fr/apie>



competition, that tended to find “good” directors for eminent Italian museums. Italy, thus, renewed its directors and showed simultaneously a concern to provide the best possible bosses⁹.

Museums are carriers of a firm identity shaped by national history – for example, French museums on account of their revolutionary origins, and the British Museum which has a tendency to be linked to English Enlightenment, etc. – and they carry as well values claimed to be global, especially related to universalism: therefore, it is a question if the use of brands will provoke a change of paradigm? **Two logics could coexist within the same institutions in the end – the one related to brand and the other related to public service. Promotion and protection of brand and a tendency for valorization and development of its resources could be in contradiction with the founding principles of the museum, as is, for example, the case in France with the principle of inalienability of collections, or the old-fashioned refusal to lend national owned art for money.**

Museums use brand to renew their identity, and to call up the imagination: the Louvre identified itself with the transparent pyramid of Pei. There is a code that in certain cases identifies the museum in city guides of Paris, using this brand for an entire Parisian district and for a shopping mall. For that reason branding and marketing approach could be questioned. Museum brands employ numeric field and deploy strategies of digital communication on social networks: it is an issue of their numerical identity. Communication could be applied as well to traditional missions of museums or be invested in brand communication. More generally, museum brands could be seen as well through mediation of their logo: LaM (Lille Métropole Museum of Modern Art), Mac/Val (Museum of Contemporary Art of Val-de-Marne). Sometimes museum enables identification of a territory with an artist or, more widely, heritage could be identified with a regional brand. Throughout Europe, heritage has largely become a part of an action to accelerate the metropolization. Major museums are part of a series of a new tourist mobility and new regional identities. The example of Bilbao is revealing in this respect.

⁹ http://www.beniculturali.it/mibac/export/MiBAC/sito-MiBAC/Contenuti/visualizza_asset.html_2133159760.html



Issues related to the public and to use of brand raise the question of evaluation – social, cultural, political – of interests and of heritage utility, as an opposition to the marketing approach. A reflection in the terms of brand, could, for its supporters, bring greater coherence to the communication actions and enable them to better assert their specific positioning. **As in the commercial sector, brand – as an expression of the values and of positioning which a firm wants to link to its products – serves simultaneously as differentiation instrument and a point of reference for the consumer: heritage is an instrument of regional competitions and a factor of attractiveness.** The case of the overindulged historic districts, deserted by their inhabitants, thus representing a “tourist bubble” that is isolated, gentrified, and influenced by museumification and Disneyfication, is another example of this issue.

Scenarios for the future

Heritage has always been an object of knowledge, in the sense that the knowledge of its objects belongs to scholarly disciplines, in the first place, to historical and archaeological ones. For the anthropologist and former Chairman of the Commission of the French Ethnological Heritage, Isac Chiva, the links between the scientific practice and heritage must be carefully considered in the future, particularly in their ethical dimension. **We must keep in mind, he points out, “a whole series of legitimate issues, although sometimes exacerbated: the political issue of status of power, or of community activism; the quest of institutional communication; the willingness to proceed in local development; the collective desire of self-celebration and self-contemplation, which is also that of community symbolic.”**

The recent generations of heritage process have undergone a democratic evolution, which is clearly seen across Europe. In his book the *Theaters of Memory* (1994) the English historian Raphael Samuel has characterized the contemporary heritage culture of his country in the following way: “The new version of the national past is inconceivably more democratic than earlier ones, offering more points of access to ‘ordinary people’, and a wider form of belonging. (...) They encourage people to look down rather than up in reconstituting their roots, ‘not to establish links with the noble and great’ – as in the days when blue blood ruled the roost – but, on the contrary, to celebrate humble origins”.



All over Europe, an “inclusive” turn was given to the heritage policies. In the most radical versions, heritage functions as an element of empowerment, of creation of social bonds, of project facilitating, of equitable development of peripheral areas. We are thus exiting an elitist heritage, and we are witnessing the development of a democratic heritage, based on a set of invented or redefined mediators.

1/ Coping with a difficult heritage that can be central and/or peripheric

There have been always different uses of the past: as the German architectural historian and civil servant of the conservation of monuments Gabi Dolff-Bonekämper put it, **“If a monument can be used for one identity construction, it can equally be used for another”**. Naturally, this kind of substitution provokes strong activism of people on one hand, and reactionary mobilizations on the other hand. Numerous examples are provided after the fall of the Wall, as are the cases of post-communist nostalgia, or the examples of partisan reinvestment in the traditional forms in Western Europe.

The recent wars in Europe, in the end of the 20th century, pointed considerably to the resources offered by heritage in that way. Yugoslavia dissolved in 1994, and in that climate, different professors, professionals from the fields of heritage, art history and history decided not to let the authorities erase Yugoslav past and finally they managed – in 1996 Museum of Yugoslav History was opened. In fact, it was Tito’s mausoleum that represented the closest connection with the idea of Yugoslavia, and numerous Yugonostalgic visitors were coming to visit the Tito’s grave and to commemorate their own lives in Yugoslavia. However, the museum perceived them as undesirable visitors and completely ignored their presence.

Another example is the one related to attempts in France to revive heritage that goes back to the Middle Ages and to the affirmation of a Christian nation through the reminiscence of Joan of Ark. The recent purchase of a ring of Joan of Ark in an auction in England lead to a ceremony of “return” of heritage to France, which took the shape of postcolonial “returns” of relics. Call for an eternal catholic France enables the success of a historical amusement park, a kind of European Disneyland in Puy du Fou which is based on mobilization of a essentialized and spectacularized heritage in the service of a political and scientifically false vision of



history¹⁰. Official frameworks of French heritage ignored this kind of initiatives, which is very popular.

These situations explain why one idea often voiced in Europe today is the pessimistic one of the impossibility of recycling heritage. The novel *Heimatmuseum* by Siegfried Lenz, published in 1978, shows how the love of the homeland could be exploited. Zygmunt Rogalla, the narrator, receives it as a religion from his great-uncle, a devotee of the movement in favour of regional culture, which flourished in the Wilhelmine era. It was tinted with xenophobic nationalism after the First World War and was orchestrated by the ideologues and strategists of the Third Reich to justify a racist and belligerent policy. The destruction of the museum collections is finally the only option to end the appropriations. This could be an unhappy metaphor of the destiny of some parts at least of European heritage. In the case of the crisis of frontiers – disintegration of Yugoslavia, or of USSR – instrumentalization of memories and of heritages was radical and really close to this scenario.

In a general sense, we could imagine that plea of new communities for heritage, or of communities which consider themselves as insufficiently recognized for a long time, and more generally an imperative to have a definition of heritage that is more inclusive and modern leads to neglect of old-fashioned heritage, which would be no more part of the social priorities. The eminent heritage as a national marker could thus be considered as an obstacle to a global culture and as a survival of a world now out-of-date: an obstacle, or deadweight for the younger generations to carry. This could be catastrophic for conservation.

2/ Towards “shareable narratives” (Luisa Passerini)¹¹ in the civil society and its commerce

Luckily, less tragic scenarios were created throughout Europe when treatment of heritages after re-dividing of frontiers could be enabled in a calm way, and in the case of Germany and Poland on either side of the Oder. The European University

¹⁰ <http://www.puydufou.com/en>

¹¹ Luisa Passerini, *Memoria e utopia: il primato dell'intersoggettività*, Bollati Boringhieri, 2003.



of Viadrina contributed to the training of specialists of architectural heritage in this occasion. This case, and others as well (but there are more ambiguous uses of the Baltic sea in contemporary representations of *Heimat*¹²), represent an example of a more peaceful “return to Europe” in memorylands after the communism¹³.

Apart from the initiatives of European and nation state’s institutions, population could appropriate disappeared heritages – especially related to the disappearance of populations and great movements after the WWII. This is particularly true in relation to new categories of intangible cultural heritage, and to women’s initiatives and memories. A recent study of restaurants in Cracow, Wrocław, Lviv and Chernivtsi by Eleonora Narvselius¹⁴ (a spin-off from the international project *Memory of Vanished Population Groups and Societies in Today’s East-Central European Urban Environments*¹⁵) shows that “commercial actors have created hybrid (neither in every respect political, nor strictly commemorative) spaces where references to historical ethnic diversity serve to evoke cultural memories and nostalgias primarily among cultured middle-class audiences”. Naturally, “creators of the thematic restaurants are well-travelled intellectuals or people with intellectual ambitions who work to attract wealthy, sophisticated visitors with a sufficiently European outlook. (...) They nevertheless strive to achieve **an uneasy balance between commercial success, incentives of local memory politics and sensitivity to dimensions of European memory, underscoring moral responsibility as well as celebration of difference**”. But we could, also see, for another study, that “the idealization of ‘our Others’ who perished might be a reaction against ‘those Others’ who are much newer, more present, and unfamiliar” and “a retreat from the collective to the individual, from

¹² Tim Bergfelder, "Shadowlands: The memory of the Ostgebiete in contemporary German film and television." *Screening War: Perspectives on German Suffering*, Rochester, NY: Camden House (2010): 123-44.

¹³ Tatiana Zhurzhenko, "The geopolitics of memory." *Eurozine*, May 10 (2007): 2007, and "Borders and memory", in Doris WastlWalter (ed.): *The Ashgate Research Companion to Border Studies*. Aldershot: Ashgate (2011): 63-84.

¹⁴ Eleonora Narvselius « Spicing up Memories and Serving Nostalgias: Thematic Restaurants and Transnational Memories in East-Central European Borderland Cities » *Journal of Contemporary European Studies*, 2015.

¹⁵ <https://memoryofvanishedurbanpopulations.wordpress.com/>



the heroic to the ironic, from the tragic to the comic"¹⁶. **Spontaneous heritagization in the everyday life may be a form of mourning and of reflective nostalgia.**

Conclusion: Can Difficult Heritage be useful for the future of Europe?

Over the past few years the States attempted to reformulate the attitude regarding difficult heritages by erecting new monuments, for example in relation to slave trade in Nantes, which resulted in a memorial and interpretation center, or by building Shoah museums throughout the Europe. A more intellectual and exclusive critical approach of memory was as well in the agendas of some museums, especially on ethnography – as it was the case of the famous 25 exhibitions in the Neuchâtel Museum imagined by such a curator as Jacques Hainard¹⁷. Some European writers and intellectuals imagined true transnational scenarii and tools for a new use of Heritage, and prove by their extraordinary talent the capacity of some tangible and intangible heritages to be useful for our contemporary deeds and imaginations¹⁸. These uses could perhaps be better developed within the framework of the elaboration of new educational and mobilizing programs worthy of European horizon. But their effectiveness still has to be proven. For example, today, more and more intellectuals are contesting what we call in France “le devoir de mémoire”, in light of its apparent inutility in front of current events. So difficult heritage is confronted to its usefulness or not, and this issue become a burning actuality, despite of general consensus, one generation ago, which seems retrospectively as a disappeared golden age of faith in the “crusade” for heritage¹⁹.

¹⁶Jack Kugelmass and Annamaria Orla-Bukowska. “If You Build It They Will Come”: Recreating an Historic Jewish District in Post-Communist Krakow.” *City & Society Annual Review* 10 (1) 1998, p. 315–353, here 342-343.

¹⁷ <http://www.men.ch/de/expositions/anciennes-expositions/black-box-depuis-1981/remise-en-boites/>

¹⁸ Nicoletta Pireddu, *The Works of Claudio Magris: Temporary Homes, Mobile Identities, European Borders*. Palgrave Macmillan, 2015 ; W. G. Sebald, "The carved wooden angels of East Anglia: Travelogue 1974." *Journal of European Studies* 41.3-4 (2011): 243-254 and Lucienne Loh, "The Politics of Postimperial Melancholia and Rural Heritage in the 1980s: WG Sebald's The Rings of Saturn." *The Postcolonial Country in Contemporary Literature*. Palgrave Macmillan, 2013, 31-56.

¹⁹ Sébastien Ledoux, *Le devoir de mémoire, Une formule et son histoire*, Paris, CNRS, 2016.



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