MEMORYLANDS

Heritage and identity in Europe today

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# CONTENTS

*List of figures*  viii  
*Acknowledgements*  x  
*Prologue*  xii  
1 The European memory complex: introduction  1  
2 Making histories: Europe, traditions and other present pasts  27  
3 Telling the past: the multitemporal challenge  52  
4 Feeling the past: embodiment, place and nostalgia  79  
5 Selling the past: commodification, authenticity and heritage  109  
6 Musealisation: everyday life, temporality and old things  137  
7 Transcultural heritage: reconfiguring identities and the public sphere  162  
8 Cosmopolitan memory: Holocaust commemoration and national identity  188  
9 The future of memory – and forgetting – in Europe  216  

*Notes*  236  
*References*  254  
*Index*  289
1

THE EUROPEAN MEMORY COMPLEX

Introduction

The imperative of our epoch is ... to keep everything, to preserve every indicator of memory

Pierre Nora

Memory has become a major preoccupation – in Europe and beyond – in the twentieth century and into the twenty-first. Long memories have been implicated in justifications for conflicts and calls for apologies for past wrongs. Alongside widespread public agonising over ‘cultural amnesia’ – fears that we are losing our foothold in the past, that ‘eye-witnesses’ of key events are disappearing, and that inter-generational memory transition is on the wane – there has been a corresponding efflorescence of public (and much private) memory work. Europe has become a memoryland – obsessed with the disappearance of collective memory and its preservation. Europe’s land- and city-scapes have filled up with the products of collective memory work – heritage sites, memorials, museums, plaques and art installations designed to remind us of histories that might otherwise be lost. More and more people live or work in or visit sites of memory; and increasing numbers are engaged in quests to save or recuperate fading or near-forgotten pasts. Local history societies, re-enactment groups and volunteer-run heritage projects flourish. Books of reminiscences and sepia photos of localities and community cram the shelves of libraries and bookstores. So too, do books about our fixation with remembering and the past.

This book is, inevitably, an addition to the memory mountain; or, more specifically, to that part of it concerned with trying to understand the memory preoccupation itself. Its particular contribution is anthropological, and more specifically still it provides a perspective from anthropological research on
Europe. Central to an anthropological perspective is the attempt to understand assumptions made by people when they organise their worlds in the ways that they do. What is taken for granted when people feel compelled to act in certain ways? What assumptions inform senses of what is important? How are feelings bound up with particular as well as with more shared experiences? Are there alternative ways of seeing, doing and feeling – perhaps to be found among peoples in other parts of the world or in the less examined parts of Europe itself – that can unsettle our assumption that things must be done or felt in the ways that are more widespread or habitual?

This book was written out of a conviction that anthropological research on Europe contains much that can probe and unsettle ways in which memory, and especially the ongoing memory and heritage boom, are typically addressed and theorised. In part this stemmed from realising that my own research on a variety of topics in various parts of Europe threw up unexpected similarities or convergences. Investigating these further was another spur to write this book. So too was a degree of frustration that although there is so much excellent ethnographic research done on Europe, studies are less often brought together and synthesised than they might be – and I include my own here. As such, anthropological research often contributes less to wider debates than it could – or, in my view, should. In part, this is probably due to anthropologists’ emphasis on the importance of context and the local, and insistence on recognising complexity, which makes us more wary of the kinds of generalisations that other disciplines are more ready to make. While this is in itself admirable, it can sometimes mean that ethnographers do not realise some of the broader implications of their work or what it shares with that of others. It also makes it hard for those from other disciplines to relate ethnographic research to their own; and this is compounded by the fact that ethnographic texts often require more careful and time-consuming reading. How to recognise the complexities and specificities that ethnographic research typically highlights and at the same time to identify broader patterns is the challenge. This book is the result of daring to take up this gauntlet.

In doing so, then, it attempts to meet two aspirations that might be seen as contradictory or at least as in tension – but that I regard as crucial to our improved understanding of Europe as a memoryland – or set of memorylands. The indeterminacy of the singular or plural here is indicative of what is at issue. On the one hand, my aim in this book is to identify some patterns in ways of approaching and experiencing the past that are widely shared across Europe. My argument is that there is a distinctive – though not exclusive or all-encompassing – complex of ways of doing and experiencing the past within Europe. This is not some kind of static template – a cultural blueprint or the like. Rather, it is a repertoire of (sometimes contradictory) tendencies and developments. The European memoryland, I contend, is characterised more by certain changes underway, and also by particular tensions and ambivalences, than by enduring memorial forms. This is not to say that there are no relatively
longstanding patterns within Europe – there are. But they are not necessarily
the most significant in the lives of European peoples. Rather than give them
analytical priority just on account of their ancestry and age, my concern is to
explore how they play out in relation to other parts of the memory complex.

On the other hand, I seek to show that there are also significant variations
within Europe. This diversity is not only of the kind that is so often used as
part of depictions of European plurality. In other words, it is not just about the
‘multicultural colour’ or ‘local flavours’ provided by, say, heritage foodstuffs or
different forms that memorial practices might take. It also concerns less evident
but potentially ramifying matters such as whether significance is attached
to collective remembering at all, whether longer or shorter time periods
are activated in local commemorative life or how personal and collective
memories are brought together. This diversity is why the plural ‘memorylands’
is appropriate. Some of this diversity exists at fairly micro, localised – perhaps
village or street – levels; but in other cases it carves up Europe along lines
relating to particular histories, such as certain patterns of nostalgia in post-
Socialist countries or attempts to devise ‘transcultural heritage’ in cities which
have experienced post-colonial immigration – though even here there are more
localised variations.

Recognising diversity is important for a number of reasons, not least for
allowing the empirical to inform analytical understanding. Variations can act
as a foil to help to highlight more common practices and assumptions, and can
irritate our theorising to lead it in new, less predictable, directions. Alternatives
may be brought to light when they come into conflict with majority patterns or
when misunderstandings rooted in difference ensue; and, as such, recognising
them – and finding better means of doing so – can also provide a basis for
improved understanding of conflicts and misunderstandings. Moreover,
awareness of ‘cultural alternatives’ can not only unsettle assumptions but can
also open up new possibilities by highlighting other routes – other ways of doing
memory, heritage and identity – that we might choose to take.

The memory phenomenon

The more specific focus of this book is what has variously been called ‘memory
fever’, ‘memory mania’, an ‘obsession with memory’, ‘the memory craze’,
a ‘remembrance epidemic’, ‘commemorative fever’, ‘the memory crisis’,
‘the memory industry’, ‘the memory boom’, and a time of ‘archive fever’
and ‘commemorative excess’. Aspects of it have also been characterised as a
‘heritage industry’, ‘heritage craze’ or ‘heritage crusade’. These terms have been
coined to characterise an increase in public attention to the past, especially its
commemoration and preservation. While prefigured earlier in various ways, this
increase is usually dated as gathering pace from the 1970s and escalating further
towards the end of the twentieth century and into the twenty-first. It includes
phenomena such as those sketched in the first paragraph of this book above, and
others including the creation of new civic rituals to commemorate (sometimes long-) past events, arguments over which histories should be aired in the public sphere and how, popular genealogy, the creation of heritage products, such as traditional foods and the broadcasting of numerous different television programmes about the past ranging from series about archaeology, with names such as *Time Team*, to historical dramas.

One notable dimension of this historical turn is that place distinctiveness increasingly seems to be marked by public reference to the past, and – sometimes and seemingly more often – to multiple pasts. Places are publicly imbued with time-depth through reference to historical narratives, and their historical content legitimated through institutions such as exhibitions, local history books and memorial plaques. This might be described as ‘historical theming’ – representing places through sets of public memories in order to configure what are assumed will be identifiably individuated ‘lands’. Ironically, rather than differentiating, this theming risks creating an apparent sameness of place – a set of familiar contours shaping a continuous land even as we cross boundaries – through its promulgation of similar strategies or techniques of historical marking. ‘Memoryland’ might easily be the name of a theme-park, or section of one; and ‘place marketing’ and ‘image-management’ are certainly involved in producing historicised village-, town- and cityscapes across Europe. But this is not the whole story and we need to probe further in order to understand why this form of thematisation occurs at all, and in order to perceive the various motives for both pursuing and challenging it. We also need to probe further if we are to perceive differences within the various ways of performing history and memory, as well as to hear the numerous voices that can be involved, and thus acknowledge the need to speak of ‘memorylands’ in the plural.

Many of the terms that have been coined to characterise the increased public attention to the past draw on the language of pathology (‘mania’, ‘epidemic’, ‘fever’, obsession’, ‘craze’) or employ other terms that carry negative connotations (‘crusade’, ‘industry’). This is expressive of an anxious perspective that many commentators adopt; and it is further entrenched through dualisms that pit the apparently disturbing developments against what is regarded as an organic or authentic relationship with the past – sometimes described as ‘tradition’, or ‘social memory’ – which, furthermore, is widely believed to be under threat. Here, I seek neither to straightforwardly accept nor dismiss this perspective. It is, in my view, itself thoroughly and constitutively part of that which it seeks to describe. In other words, the concern expressed about the ‘memory mania’ and its correlated preoccupation with questions of authenticity and loss are part of the ways in which the past is ‘done’ in Europe today. My choice of the term ‘memory phenomenon’ (cf. Kansteiner 2002: 183), then, is intended as less affectively loaded and also as a means of encompassing not only the expansion of public preoccupation with the past but also popular and academic debates and concerns about it.
The memory complex

If the memory phenomenon is the notable increase in attention to the past – and attention to that attention – that has been underway since the second half of the twentieth century, the memory complex is the wider whole of which it is part. Although I use the term memory complex, it should be seen as shorthand for something like ‘the memory-heritage-identity complex’ for these are all tightly interwoven. In choosing to use the term ‘complex’ I have been influenced by its meanings in a number of disciplines, as well as its etymology and allusion to complexity theory. Its general meaning is of an entity ‘consisting of parts united or combined’ (Oxford Etymological Dictionary). Its etymology also carries connotations that are apposite for my use here. Derived from the Latin complexus, past participle of complectere, meaning ‘encompass, embrace, comprehend, comprise’, it is also ‘sometimes analysed as … woven’ (Concise Oxford English Dictionary p.198). A complex, in the sense that I want to develop it here, comprises different elements, woven more or less loosely together. It also has a propulsion towards further encompassment partly through offering what becomes an increasingly taken-for-granted form of comprehending and experiencing.

The ways in which the term ‘complex’ is used in various disciplines can help, by analogy, to explain this further. A chemical complex is a substance that is ‘formed by a combination of compounds’ (COED); ‘the formation of complexes’, says the Encyclopaedia Britannica, ‘has a strong effect on the behaviour of solutions’. In Mathematics, complex numbers are made up of real and imaginary parts, the latter being used to help solve mathematical problems that cannot be solved with real numbers alone; and in Linguistics a complex sentence is one including subordinate clauses. What I want to draw out from these is the idea of the complex as consisting of non-exhaustive patterned combinations and relationships; and of complexes themselves gaining autonomous meanings, effects and possibilities for ‘going on’.

I do not, however, want to adopt the popular psychological connotation of a ‘complex’ as being a pathological psychic-emotional condition, though in Carl Jung’s introduction of the term into psychology, he did not regard a complex as necessarily negative (Jung 1971/1921). His understanding of a complex as a meshing of parts and tendencies that add up to some pattern to which we might put a name, and that we can identify with particular effects, does capture the sense of complex that I am striving for here. In addition, Jung’s emphasis on the mix of the cognitive, affective and physical, and his argument about the relevance of history and myth, resonates with what I regard as necessary to include in an understanding of the memory complex, though I do not position my perspective within, or draw on other aspects of, his wider theorising.

Assemblage and complexity

My use of the notion of ‘complex’ is similar to that of ‘assemblage’ as it has come to be used in recent years in some social and cultural theorising. Both
designate some kind of ‘entity’ made up of constituent inter-related parts that then has effects (assemblage theory often refers to ‘potentials’ or ‘capacities’) of its own. As with assemblage, I also want to stress that a complex is not an abstraction, though it may contain abstractions. Rather, it is made up, variously, of constituent practices, affects and materialisations. The memory complex can be seen, therefore, as an assemblage of practices, affects and physical things, which includes such parts as memorial services, nostalgia and historical artefacts. Moreover, assemblage theory insists that we be wary of taking particular objects or categories for granted and that to do this we should investigate specific instances – so, for example, we should examine particular shops and markets rather than simply ‘the market’, or particular museums and heritage sites rather than ‘heritage’ as a generalised category. By doing so, we can recognise the potential variety of forms that a wider term might designate. In addition, we can apprehend the particular mix of human and non-human, conceptual and physical, elements that are involved in constituting a particular assemblage/complex; and we can also identify the processes that contribute to, say, making certain notions or ways of doing things durable or making them capable of extending beyond their locality of origin.

This characterisation fits the approach of this book well, in that it gathers its material from specific instances and gives attention to a wide range of elements, including the materialisation of memory in heritage. Little of the research that I report here, however, has been conceived explicitly within an assemblage perspective. The studies on which I draw are nevertheless often amenable to consideration in relation to assemblage ideas because, as Bruno Latour, one of the architects of an assemblage approach, acknowledges, anthropological research is frequently conducted with just such an emphasis on looking at what actually goes on and interrogating what is taken-for-granted, and thus refrains as far as possible from imputing ‘external’ (or he says, ‘magical’) categories (2005: 68). Indeed, this is why much anthropological theorising proceeds by questioning existing theoretical positions by unsettling their assumptions through in-depth ethnographic examples. This methodological prudence of assemblage and much anthropological theorising extends also to its imputations of agency and causality. Again, there is an emphasis on empirical investigation coupled with a rejection of assumptions of linear causality or singular agents: instead, the stress tends is on the complex and particular coming together of a mix of agents (human and non-human), and on unpredictable – though not unpatterned and random – effects.

The point that complexity should not be seen as random or chaotic is important and is one reason for the fact that assemblage theory and complexity theory (which is referenced to many of the same authors and shares many of the same ideas)’ have produced an extensive vocabulary of terms to try to identify and characterise processes and patterns. The natural sciences have provided particular inspiration here, complexity and assemblage theorising variously employing terms such as ‘feedback’, ‘circulation’, ‘density’, ‘principles
of association’, ‘attractors; ‘emergent properties’ and the like. While these can be thought-provoking and illuminating in specific analyses – and I employ some below – I do not seek to use them in any extensive way here. This is primarily because the production of these more general characterisations and distinctions is not my ambition. Rather, I am interested in exploring the specific constellation of the memory phenomenon in Europe and the memory complex of which it is part. This requires, in my view, attention also to meso-level theorising, which can often illuminate particular formations and processes better than can a jump straight to broad ontological claims. In addition, my analysis gives more emphasis to human meaning-making, linguistic connotations and the like than is typically given the case in assemblage theory, though it does not necessarily rule these out. In the chapters that follow, then, I only occasionally draw directly on the language of assemblage. This includes using the term ‘assemblage’ for specific constellations within the peculiar agglomeration of elements concerned with memory that is the overall focus of my investigation, and that I dub the memory complex. Nevertheless, there are other ways in which much of the research discussed here resonates with assemblage theory, including an emphasis on materiality, as discussed further below.

Methodology

Although I give particular attention to research carried out by anthropologists, I put this into dialogue with theorising from many disciplines and I do not exclude empirical work carried out within other disciplinary approaches where it bears upon the discussion at hand. This is especially so in Chapter 3, which is concerned with method and includes discussion of the relationship between anthropological and historical research. Personally, I am inclined towards methodological pluralism and believe that bringing together research conducted within different disciplinary approaches can be analytically powerful, though it needs careful coordination and attention to methodological issues. Here, however, I particularly want to show what anthropological approaches can contribute to European memory debates and so for the most part my case studies are of research conducted by anthropologists of Europe. Doing so will, I hope, also be of value for future multi-disciplinary research.

My use of the term ‘anthropology’ needs some clarification here as not all of those who I discuss as ‘anthropologists’ would necessarily use this term themselves. Across Europe, as well as beyond it, there is some inconsistency in the ways in which ‘anthropology’ and related terms, such as ‘ethnology’ and ‘ethnography’, are used. Here, I do not include biological or physical anthropology; rather, my compass is what in the British tradition is usually called social anthropology and in North America is referred to as cultural anthropology. Although non-European societies were the main focus of these disciplines historically, this is no longer so. This is also the case in many but not all continental European traditions, in which there is often a distinction made
between ‘anthropology’ as referring to work outside Europe and ethnology to refer to that undertaken within, or sometimes more specifically still, the home nation-state. In Germany, for example, a distinction is institutionalised between Völkerkunde, focusing on peoples outside Europe, and Volkskunde, looking at those within. Today the names have sometimes changed, with Sozial Anthropologie sometimes being used in place of Völkerkunde, and Ethnologie, or sometimes more specifically, ‘European Ethnology’ (Europäische Ethnologie), on research within Europe, though there is increasing overlap, represented in a greater use of the term ‘cultural anthropology’. As in many other continental European countries, German ethnology had and often still has a strong overlap with folklore, sometimes being indistinguishable from it. In using the term ‘anthropology’, then, I do so in catholic fashion, to include what might elsewhere be called ‘ethnology’ or equivalents in various languages. This does not mean, however, that I cover all of the various forms of ‘anthropology’ being conducted within Europe, and for the most part I do not include the more folkloric work. Rather, I make my arguments through selected examples of research that, while it may go under various labels, mostly adopts approaches consonant with those I outline in the rest of this section.

The research included here puts an emphasis on qualitative methods conducted within a Verstehen approach that aims to grasp participants’ perspectives and experiences – an approach that goes beyond recording of voices and cultural collecting, typical of folklore as classically conceived. It generally involves a commitment to considering social and cultural phenomena as ‘total’ or ‘totalities’ in a sense used by one of the founders of French ethnology, Marcel Mauss (1872–1950). Although there is debate about his use of this term, one of the main ways in which he used it was to emphasise how what might initially appear as different aspects of social life or human experience might be interrelated. So, a social phenomenon – such as the gift or sacrifice – might cut across categories such as the economy or religion, and thus could not be properly understood if their analysis was restricted to these. Ethnology was valuable in his view precisely because it allowed for attention to the concrete and complexity that he saw as lacking in the reductionism and abstraction of the new discipline of sociology being propounded by Durkheim, his uncle (Hart 2007). Significantly, his view of the importance of ‘totality’ in this sense was informed by his study of diverse cultures, predominantly non-European, which also made him aware of the limitations of analysis that restricted itself to Western categories, as well as of the challenge to dominant assumptions that such studies could provide. Although Mauss’ own research was conducted second-hand, through examining studies undertaken by others, other anthropologists have developed methods that allow for an ethnological grasping of ‘totality’ and potentially also for challenging of analytical categories.

These methods are usually called ethnographic and typically involve some kind of in-depth and fairly small-scale study, often over a lengthy time period. Although participant-observation is sometimes regarded as synonymous with
ethnography, anthropologists may employ a wide range of specific methods, such as oral histories, semi-structured interviews, spatial mapping, photography, filmmaking and other visual and sensory methodologies, as well as textual analysis, and sometimes also surveys (e.g. of households). Rather than the application of a particular methodological toolkit, what characterises the anthropological approach is a commitment to trying to see and experience life-worlds from the point of view of those who live them and within the context of which they are part. This goes beyond simply recording ‘native voices’ but entails a rigorous commitment to trying to grasp the patterns of relations of which utterances, practices, feelings and so forth, are part; and what they may be linked with. This frequently involves or leads to reflexivity about categories of analysis and forms of knowledge production – including the role of scholarship itself.

The emphasis on the small-scale deserves note here too. This allows for attention to detail that can potentially disrupt more generalising accounts. In addition, it may also open up the opportunity to hear ‘quiet voices’ or see perspectives or recognise feelings that are easily overlooked, either because they are held by people with little access to forms of expression that reach a wide public or because the forms that the expression takes are not usually recognised by the academy. A smaller scale of research also allows for direct interaction by the researcher, an approach in which their person and own history may become part of the study, as we will see in some examples below. Furthermore, a smaller scale can make it easier to see the connections between aspects of life or the multi-dimensionality of practices in a way consonant with Mauss’ notion of totality. This does not mean, however, that research need only look at ‘small’ topics or for connections between what has been directly examined within the direct empirical study. Here, the notion of ‘totality’ potentially causes problems if it is understood as indicating a bounded self-integrated system, as Durkheim theorised in his functional understanding of ‘society’. While many anthropological studies up until about the 1960s, and in some cases since, have been undertaken in a functionalist framework, which in European anthropological research often meant that the village was taken as the functioning unit and ‘natural’ object of study, since then researchers have increasingly rejected this model and sought ways of exploring connections across and beyond boundaries, and finding ways to bring insights from their micro-perspectives to ‘speak out’. To do so they have often developed new approaches, as we will see in later chapters, while still retaining a commitment to concrete study of specific worlds, events or phenomena. As Regina Bendix argues in a discussion of the distinctive perspective offered by cultural anthropology on the ‘big’ topic of ‘global heritage’, for example, ‘only such micro approaches, in fact, can properly reveal the local specificity of a global heritage regime’ (2009: 255). Only such approaches can show what notions such as ‘global heritage regime’ might mean and how they might work in practice. The global is, after all, inevitably imagined and realised in particular, local, worlds – ‘worlds’ which might equally be UNESCO meetings or remote villages.
The problem with memory

Although I have so far cast the topic of this book in terms of memory – memorylands, the memory phenomenon and the memory complex – I want in this section to add some reservations, warnings and clarifications about its use. I then provide a brief introduction to some of the many classifications of types of memory and remembering that scholars have employed, and also to look at some other possible ways of framing the analysis. A major problem with memory as a category of analysis is its very ubiquity and capaciousness, which is itself part of the memory phenomenon that this book explores. The fact that ‘memory’ can refer to a mental function or faculty (the act of remembering or ability to do so), and also to content (what is remembered) renders it widely applicable. This partly accounts for why it is used in numerous disciplines and areas of popular culture, ranging from concerns over false-memory syndrome to the technical capacity of digital storage, from neurological studies of everyday mnemonic capabilities to social investigation of collective remembering. While this book mainly addresses the last of these, it is important to note that these different concerns are not disconnected but may feed into, shape and sustain one another. Loss of cultural memory, for example, may be likened to Alzheimer’s; forms of organising digital storage may be configured through cultural forms such as the filing cabinet (documents, files). The analogy between individual or personal recollection and social or cultural is pervasive and informs understanding of both – and, as such, needs itself to be given analytical attention.

Making such analogies is not itself new; individual memory almost always being conceptualised through cultural forms. In medieval Europe, for example, memory was often conceptualised as parchment, and, thus, as a medium capable of bearing imprints of experience or as a hive of bees or forest or – when properly trained – a library, thesaurus or storage room. Prevalent metaphors may change – today computers are more likely analogies than parchment – and this plays into how memory is understood, undertaken and even researched. Some analogies, for example, more readily support attempts to train the memory, or to regard it as springing surprises as cobwebs are swept from its dark recesses or as environmental stimuli spark involuntary firing of neural connections. Not only does the cultural provide metaphors for individual memory, however, there is also, according to Pierre Nora, ‘an exact chronological coincidence’ between a ‘preoccupation with the individual psychology of remembering’ and the rise of concern about the loss of social memory (1989: 15). He dates this to the end of the nineteenth century, and associates it especially with ‘the disintegration of the rural world’ (1989: 15). What we see with the vanishing of the pre-modern, he writes, is that ‘memory appeared … at the core of psychological personality, with Freud; at the heart of literary autobiography, with Proust’ (1989: 15). ‘We owe to Freud and to Proust’, he adds, ‘those two intimate and yet universal sites of memory, the primal scene and the celebrated petite madeleine’ (1989: 15). Since then, he argues, preoccupation with memory has only increased, escalating in
The European memory complex

11

the twentieth-century modern proliferation of what he calls lieux de memoire – ‘sites of memory’ – and further still in what he sees as a late twentieth-century postmodern acceleration. The traffic between theories of individual and of collective remembering has likewise burgeoned, with psychological ideas designed to understand individual memory increasingly being applied to collective or social memory.

**Individual and collective**

Psychological and psychoanalytic concepts devised for individual memory that have been used in relation to collective or social memory, include ‘trauma’, ‘the unconscious’, ‘repression’, ‘flash-bulb memories’, ‘semantic memory’ and ‘episodic remembering’. In popular accounts this use is generally seamless, with little apparent consideration of whether such terms might be appropriate, and this is sometimes the case too in academic work, though there is also careful and illuminating use (as we will see in subsequent chapters). The potential problem, however, is that the social and individual become conflated and it is assumed that collectives work in the same way that individual psychology is theorised as doing, e.g. that nations have an unconscious and that they may suffer psychological trauma from the effects of repressing memories. Used loosely, such notions naturalise processes and leave exploration of what might actually be going on untouched. Furthermore, the individualised psychological model treats ‘memory [as] a distinct phenomenon that can be studied in relative isolation from other mental functions’ (Wertsch 2009: 122). Memory thus becomes understood as involving various relatively autonomous known processes rather than through its specific workings and possible connections of a Maussian ‘total’ kind.

As Michael Lambek argues, this also takes for granted a model of autonomous individuals as vessels of memory. Drawing on Mauss’ notion of personnage – a role-related and intersubjectively constituted notion of personhood – and his ethnographic research on spirit possession in Madagascar to highlight alternatives to this model, he argues that in ‘Western discourse’ memory has been made a ‘romanticized object’ (2003: 210). By the latter – a term that he borrows from Hannah Arendt – he means a form of naturalisation, that turns a supposed quality (‘Jewishness’ is her example) into a ‘thing’, then taken for granted as, variously, explanation, property of subjects and object of investigation. This then, in turn, supports the assumption of autonomous individuals. As he notes, similar processes occur at collective level, the elision between individual and collective memory reinforcing an individuation of collectives through attribution of shared memory. In discussions of personal identity, memory is almost always a key theme, often being regarded as a kind of glue, holding identity together over time. As such, memory – as a body of recollection – can itself become an indicator of identity. This is a notion that works powerfully in the social domain and informs the centrality of memory
The European memory complex
and heritage debates in the politics of recognition and identity. Implicated here too is the conceptualisation of memory as a possession – as something that we ‘have’ rather than ‘do’ (Lambeek 1996); and this is reflected in the persistence of metaphors of memory as a treasure house, museum or archive. This in turn helps substantiate the notion of identities as individuated and ‘possessive’, a model that political theorist C.B. MacPherson (1962) argues had become an assumption amongst seventeenth-century English liberals and is ‘not abandoned yet’ (1962: 4). He describes this ‘possessive individualism’ as entailing a ‘conception of the individual as essentially the proprietor of his own person or capacities … as an owner of himself’ (1962: 3). This was notably and influentially articulated by John Locke, in his ‘forensic’ conception of ‘the person’, in which primacy was given to memory – ‘consciousness of the past’ – as an indicator of personal identity. This same conception infuses that of the nation-state, which flowered within Western Europe in the eighteenth century and has spread across much of the world since. Nations are thus conceptualised as possessive individuals, with heritage acting as the materialised rendition of their memory as property. In a self-supporting reverse move, ‘having’ – possessing – a distinctive heritage, memory and culture helps to instantiate and substantiate the nation (or other collective) ‘as a living individual’ (Handler 1988: 41). These cultural assumptions are interrelated and mutually reinforcing parts in Europe’s memory complex.

None of this means avoiding examining the relationship between individual and collective remembering. It is, rather, a call for attention to the movement and implications of models and terms, including those used in analysis. In order to avoid some of the problems with ‘memory’, Jay Winter and Emmanuel Sivan (1999; see also Winter 2009) suggest employing the term ‘remembrance’ as a means of putting emphasis onto processes and practices of remembering and to avoid reifying ‘memory’ as an object. Framing research as ‘remembrance’, they contend, allows for investigation of the articulation of individual and collective remembering, rather than assuming a ‘collective’ memory that is necessarily shared by individuals. Anthropological approaches are especially well suited to accomplishing this, they argue, as they give attention to the differential roles and agency of different participants as well as to cultural forms (e.g. rituals or monuments) of remembrance.

Their is a thoughtful proposition that works well for the explicit forms of commemoration with which they are concerned. It does not, however, capture the full range of practices and processes that are involved in the memory phenomenon and memory complex. While these all entail reference to the past in some form, they are not necessarily forms of remembrance in the sense of either commemorating or actively remembering a particular past. Indeed, some engagements with ‘the past’ may entail very little ‘remembering’ or even memory content at all. This is one reason why I have suggested ‘past presencing’ as a possibly preferable alternative means of framing investigation (Macdonald 2012). Not only does this allow for consideration of a broader range
of phenomena, without assuming either intentional recollection, or pre-given processes or known actors, it also avoids some of the problematic distinctions of which memory is part – especially that between history and memory. I return to it below, after consideration of various other distinctions and terms. I should note, however, that despite the shortcomings of ‘memory’, I continue to use it in this book because the phenomenon with which I am concerned is usually framed in this way, as is so much relevant debate.

**Memory and history**

In popular and also academic discourse, especially that of historians, memory is often defined through a distinction with history. Like ‘memory’, the English word ‘history’ is ambiguous, referring both to the past – what happened – as well as to accounts of that past and study of it. This ambiguity supports a popular vision of historical scholarship as an objective enterprise of establishing the facts of what happened; and also of the past as a body of factual evidence. Memory, when opposed to this vision of history, is regarded as subjective and fallible, based on individual recollections rather than proper evidence verified through expert institutional practices and persons. While this opposition is prevalent in Europe today, it is increasingly – as part of the memory phenomenon – accompanied, and sometimes supplanted, by a reversed evaluation. This sees established history become suspect as the product of elites, who are said to mystify their interests under the misleading banner of value-free facts. Memory, meanwhile, is elevated to a status of greater ‘honesty’, and seen as relatively unmediated and transparent in its very subjectivity.

Pierre Nora’s classic work, which operates at one level as an insightful discussion of the memory phenomenon, has also been a significant player in a reversed evaluation – and moralisation – of history and memory. He writes, for example, of

> the difference between real memory – social and unviolated … and history, which is how our hopelessly forgetful modern societies, propelled by change, organize the past … Memory is life… History, on the other hand, is the reconstruction, always problematic and incomplete, of what is no longer.

(1989: 8)

Memory here is romanticised as an organic part of life, and therefore ‘real’, and history vilified as a sterile and doomed attempt to capture a past that has been lost. This is part of a relentless discourse that seeks to identify and even rescue authentic forms of life, and that is more usefully seen as part of the memory phenomenon that he discusses rather than analysis of it.

Drawing and maintaining a clear-cut distinction between history and memory can cause as many analytical problems as it solves, as many commentators have
pointed out.\textsuperscript{24} In particular, it tends to direct attention to questions of veracity – which provides the truer account of the past? While this is a legitimate question, it cannot be answered in general terms and requires clarification of what is mean by ‘truth’ (e.g. recounted with personal integrity, accuracy with relation to other known facts).\textsuperscript{25} Moreover, in research practice, the line between history and memory may be blurred. For example, an historical account might draw on individual reminiscences, and remembered events may find ample substantiation in other contemporary sources – or even be recalled with reference to them (e.g. discussion of individual experience of war following a television documentary or getting out the official album of the Queen’s coronation during individual reminiscence). The more important issue is the specific contexts, motives and frameworks of production of the various accounts and their forms of veracity. Also significant from an anthropological perspective – as we will see in later chapters – is how the terms themselves are variously defined and deployed in their use, and the evaluations that they are given.

**Memory terminologies and alternatives**

Because of the looseness of terms such as ‘memory’ and ‘history’, there has been a proliferation of related terms created either to better frame the field of study or to make distinctions between kinds of processes or practices. It is not my intention to discuss this in detail but I offer a brief commentary here on some of the terms most commonly in use, and others that I regard as particularly helpful. Others are introduced as they arise in specific discussions later in the book.

**Collective, social, cultural … memory**

The terms ‘collective memory’ and ‘social memory’ are used to differentiate from personal or individual memory and to refer instead to memories that are held by social groups and/or forms of remembering that are held in some kind of common. They are usually referenced to French sociologist Maurice Halbwachs (1877–1945), whose work in this field was posthumously published as *La Mémoire Collective* (1950).\textsuperscript{26} His concern was to emphasise the importance of social groups in creating frameworks for remembering – for example, the role of the family in transmitting memory – and also the significance of shared memory for creating senses of collective solidarity. Halbwachs has been criticised for taking for granted the existence of stable social entities as the producers of memory, and for overstating the determining role of the collective memory so produced for individual remembering.\textsuperscript{27} Most of those using the terms subsequently, however, do not adopt Halbwachs’ position wholesale; and much productive work has been undertaken under these rubrics on questions such as how creating shared memories might be part of creating social entities (e.g. the nation), rather than the other way around, or investigating the various positions that individuals might adopt in relation to collective commemoration.
In my own use here I likewise use ‘social memory’ and ‘collective memory’ to refer to accounts or representations of the past that make some kind of claim to being shared rather than assuming that ‘collective’ means necessarily held by all. Another attractive alternative, however, is James E. Young’s ‘collected memory’ (1993), employed in his study of memorials in order to theorise these as sites around which diverse memories may accumulate. Rather than directing attention to what is shared by participants in memory practices, a collected memory approach leaves open the question of whether those engaging in a practice necessarily attribute it with the same meanings.

‘Social memory’ and ‘cultural memory’ are sometimes deployed interchangeably. It is useful for analysis, however, to use ‘cultural memory’ more specifically to indicate memory whose primary form of transmission is through cultural media, such as texts, film and television, and museums and exhibitions, rather than through direct person-to-person transmission. Although the dividing line may blur here too – visiting a museum, for example, is also a social practice involving person-to-person contact – it is helpful in that it directs analytical concern to questions of how memory is mediated and the implications of this for matters such as its durability over time or capacity to ‘travel’ across space. Materialised into cultural forms, the resources for cultural memory may remain even when direct transmission of social memory – or what Jan Assmann (2008) calls ‘communicative memory’ – no longer occurs. In some research the term ‘social memory’ is reserved for this direct communicative memory but more usually it includes both communicative and cultural memory as defined here, and this is the sense in which it is used in this book.

**Historical consciousness and past presencing**

In order to avoid some of the problems of the history/memory distinction and to put emphasis firmly onto questions of how the past is conceptualised and represented, some researchers choose to frame their investigation in terms of ‘historical consciousness’, as we will see in later chapters. This draws attention to questions about matters such as the ‘narrative structures’ or ‘temporal orientations’ through which the past is apprehended. Although work of this kind does not always assume that people will be aware of the forms that their historical thinking takes, the term ‘historical consciousness’ can be confusing in that it implies active awareness. Moreover, this is how it is used by some theorists. In Gadamer’s classical discussion, for example, he is concerned to specify the development of a reflexive – historically conscious – relationship to history. Rather differently, it is also often used in discussions of history education, sometimes in laments over the lack of historical knowledge (‘historical awareness’) of particular social groups (see Chapter 2). Another shortcoming of the term – and of most though not all research undertaken under its rubric – is that it directs attention to cognitive process rather than to more embodied modes of engaging with the past.
In suggesting ‘past presencing’ as a way of demarcating the field of study, my intention is to find a broad frame that allows for as much Maussian totalising as possible; and that allows for unconscious or embodied relationships with the past as well as more conceptual ones. This aims to avoid pre-defining what is involved in a wide array of social and cultural engagements with the past. It also tries to avoid the dilemma of ‘analytic double-take’ (Macdonald 2012: 234), where those being studied use the same language as that being used to frame analysis. That is, by using a terminology that is not part of what Gable and Handler describe as ‘native discourse of memory’ (2011: 43), it seeks analytical leverage on the fact that terms such as ‘memory’ and ‘history’ are part of the ‘memory phenomenon’ under investigation. By so doing, it aims also to avoid the usual dualisms and connotations that infuse these debates. One charge against this way of framing the debate might be that it does not perform a theoretical refinement by narrowing down and making the field more precise. It seems to me, however, that what is required at this stage in research is a broad recasting of the field that does not overly constrict its scope and that conceptual refinement – for example, exploring differentiations between specific processes – can then take proceed more effectively. Another possible charge is that ‘past presencing’ is presentist: its concern is with how the past is related to at specified moments or stretches of time. In defining the field in this way, however, my intention is not to say that historical research should be conducted in this way – historians can continue about their business as they please! I make no assumptions that the only worth or interest of the past is in its relation or use in the present – the argument is simply for looking at this. It is neither to maintain that such an approach cannot be tackled historically. Although much anthropological research does involve direct study of ongoing action, not all does so and how the past was made present in the past is as fully valid a focus for attention as is ‘past presencing’. The analytical ‘present’ of study might well be the past – indeed, it is inevitably so, if only recent.

It should also be emphasised that ‘past presencing’ does not entail taking for granted what will be considered ‘past’ or ‘present’ in practice, neither indeed whether a distinction will operate between these; on the contrary, part of its point is to indicate the elision and indeterminacy that is so often involved, and the disruption of linear notions of past preceding present preceding future. Ghosts, monuments, and old furniture are some of the many means by which the past may inhabit the present – and the future – or perhaps that a continuous past may embrace present and future. While linguistically differentiating between past, present and future operates widely in Europe, and all its indigenous languages, Indo-European and not (e.g. Basque, Hungarian), have a past tense, there are nevertheless differences between languages in which grammatical tenses are deemed appropriate when (for example, German often uses the present tense where English would use past or future), as well as in the tenses themselves (for example, French has many different past tenses, making distinctions such as between repeated actions that used to occur and actions
that are completely finished in the past). Likewise, in social practice, though not necessarily mapping directly onto languages, there can be distinctions between kinds of pasts – variously related to as fully over, periodised, continuing or likely to return; as well as of presents and futures, and the relations between them – linear, cumulative, non-cumulative, progressive, regressive, reversible, irreversible, disconnected, cyclical, rhythmic, looping, spiralling and so forth. Past-presencing, then, necessarily gives attention to temporality. Reinhart Koselleck’s philosophical reflections on how ‘time is historically enacted in humans as historical beings’ suggests that the present is ‘elusive’ and constituted ‘in the relationship between past and future’ (2002: 111). Although the ‘temporal dimension’ that he calls ‘space of experience’ most closely maps onto what I am here calling ‘past presencing’ – namely, the framework ‘out of which one acts, in which past things are present or can be remembered’ (2002: 111) – this is tightly bound up with a more future-oriented form of temporality that he calls ‘horizon of expectation’.

How we conceive the future has implications for how we conceive the present and the past – and vice versa. More importantly, as he argues, the relationship between the space of experience and the horizon of expectation may shift (and has shifted significantly in Europe at certain historical moments (Koselleck 2004/1979)), thus altering, for example, the significance that the past is accorded in anticipations of the future. The implications of past presencing for imagining futures is a concern that runs through many chapters that follow.

Heritage

Another way of framing the concerns of this book – and that is also part of ‘native discourse’ – is ‘heritage’. Over the past decade heritage studies has blossomed as a lively forum for debate, moving from a predominant concern with questions of conservation to interest in the politics and, more recently, the phenomenology of heritage. There is a good deal of overlap with what also is considered under the rubric of memory studies, though the connotations and framing differ to some extent. Where ‘memory’ entices social researchers into analogies with individual memory and the language of psychology and also prompts questions about veracity and transmission, ‘heritage’ directs attention to materiality, durability over time and value. In more conservative heritage approaches, this may centre on questions about how to identify the worth of different kinds of heritage and manage it accordingly; but in critical heritage study it leads to interrogation of why and how some things come to count as ‘heritage’ and the consequences that flow from this. Because much discussion of heritage has been concerned with material forms – monuments, buildings and the like – research conducted in its terms has contributed some sophisticated discussion of ‘intangible heritage’. Indeed, the very term ‘intangible heritage’ – for practices that might previously have been called ‘tradition’ – speaks to this framing.
It also speaks, however, to what Barbara Kirshenblatt-Gimblett calls the ‘meta-cultural’ status of heritage (2006) – the way in which once something is identified as ‘heritage’ it is inevitably altered. As she argues, this occurs in particular ways through ‘metacultural operations’ (2006: 162), such as conservation, listing and becoming part of the ‘tourist gaze’ (Urry 1990), which have multiple consequences for people and other things within its orbit and for its future. In like vein, Bernhard Tschofen points out that one ‘banal but not self-evident’ feature of heritage is that it ‘can be visited’ (2007: 26). Extending this, we can say that heritage turns the past into something visitable; and, as Tschofen contends, research should then consider the implications of heritage’s Präsenzeffekts – the ways in which heritage makes the past’s presence felt (2007: 29). All of this contributes to making ‘heritage’ a productive focus of research. Heritage legislation, heritage management, heritage conventions, heritage tours, heritage sites and so on and so forth are thoroughly part of European memorylands, constituting an identifiable field of practice for investigation.

Heritage is, moreover, an especially efficacious element in the European memory complex, capable of reorganising land- and city- scapes and validating certain social groups (and not others). A manifestation of possessive individualism, heritage invariably implies ownership – at least metaphorical but usually actual property relations – and as such instantiates whosoever’s heritage it is said to be. More broadly, one of the most important accomplishments of heritage is to turn the past from something that is simply there, or has merely happened, into an arena from which selections can be made and values derived. We might even put this as heritage turning the past into The Past.

As a set of metacultural operations, heritage is increasingly global. At the same time, however, what is meant by ‘heritage’ – and the expectations that flow from it – does not necessarily map seamlessly onto the diverse contexts in which it is put to work, even within Europe. An excellent edited collection of cultural anthropological research on heritage is entitled Prädikat 'Heritage' (Predicate 'Heritage') (Hemme et al. 2007). By using the English word ‘heritage’ in their German title, the editors neatly point out that it is this, English-language, term – and its specific connotations – that is being globalised, and that it acts as a predicate by asserting the very existence of ‘heritage’, as well as asserting as ‘heritage’ whatever it is attached to. As they explain, ‘heritage’ does not have a precise equivalent in German; and neither does it in most other European languages. In German, the usual term used in relation to heritage developments such as conservation and listing is Denkmal (e.g. Denkmalschutz for heritage conservation), which also means ‘monument’ and speaks to an emphasis on material and public heritage. By contrast, patrimoine in French and patrimonio in Spanish have as part of their etymological root the notion of ‘country’ and yet can apply to personal inheritance as well as collective. While the inflections may be slight, they can have consequences for heritage practice, as discussed in Chapter 5 (with reference to the Scottish Gaelic term dualchas). They highlight variations within the European memory complex – even while, at the same
time, the various conceptions may share at least some assumptions, as well as, perhaps, coming to resemble one another more closely as a consequence of predicate heritage.

**Europe and others**

As the preceding discussion shows, Europe is characterised by diversity as well as by certain prevalent – but not all encompassing – patterns. In describing such patterns, my intention is neither to suggest that these are necessarily exclusive to Europe, nor that they can be used as a means of identifying what is ‘truly’ European and what is not. Claims of exclusivity usually founder either in light of the global diffusion of cultural forms, such as the nation-state or ‘predicate heritage’, or in view of the fact that many cultural patterns prevalent in Europe – such as using items of material culture as mementoes of the dead or telling linear histories – can be found in other places too. More important, however, is that my aim in discussing patterns is not to highlight Europe’s uniqueness – an enterprise that is widely undertaken in service of substantiating and legitimating ‘Europe’. Doubtless, Europe is unique – but this is just a banal fact and it is not more (or less) unique than any other continent.

Anthropology has often employed an opposition between Europe (sometimes glossed as ‘the West’) and other parts of the world in its analyses. Claude Lévi-Strauss’s distinction between ‘hot’ and ‘cold’ societies, for example, characterises ‘our’ (European) societies as ‘hot’ in that time is conceived as linear, changing and unrepeatable; they are societies that ‘have internalised their own historicity’ (Gell 1992: 23). Cold’ societies, by contrast, conceive themselves as closed systems, and operate according to mythical, repeatable or cyclical temporality. Many commentators have been critical of this idea, mainly because it reifies an absolute distinction that they deem untenable.40 Eric Wolf, for example, provides a robust dismissal of the supposition that any people have been left ‘outside history’ in his ironically entitled *Europe and the People without History* (1982). As Kirsten Hastrup (1992: 2) points out, however, Wolf’s argument retains an idea of history as an especially European phenomenon in its depiction of how European expansion has long and insistently affected lives around the globe. More undermining of the distinction are examples of the historical thinking that Lévi-Strauss dubs ‘hot’ in other parts of the world – as John Davis provides in an article that is a neat riff on Wolf’s: ‘History and the people without Europe’ (1992). Also disruptive of the absolute nature of the opposition are examples of alternative modes of conceptualising temporality and history – what Hastrup calls ‘other histories’ – within Europe. Many examples will follow later in this book but to just make the point here, and to emphasise that alternatives are not somehow ‘not European’, we might turn to an example provided by Marc Abélès in his study of one of the most modern central locations of Europe – the European Commission in Brussels. The predominant temporality there, he argues, is quite counter to the pervasive historicising so widely seen in Europe.
Instead, amidst a relentless sense of urgency, “’One goes ahead without looking back, as if one were driving without a rear-view mirror’”, as one official said to him (2000: 32). In consequence ‘Everything happens as if the Commission was not able to think about its own relation to history’ (2000: 32) – a form of historical consciousness (or non-consciousness perhaps) that he sees as part of the Commission’s lack of institutional self-awareness.

Despite critiques of such oppositions – provided by exceptions and post-colonial nervousness over making Europe special – they can nevertheless be ‘good to think with’, to borrow from Lévi-Strauss’ phraseology (1963/1962). Marilyn Strathern’s contrasts between Melanesian ways of doing and thinking and those she calls ‘Euro-American’ is a notable case-in-point; and has led to extensive productive discussion as well as criticism for much the same reasons as those raised in relation to Lévi-Strauss’ hot and cold division. Highlighting alterity, as Strathern does, can be particularly valuable as a means of making us aware of what we might readily take for granted – e.g. notions of persons as individual rather than dividual. In my own thinking about concepts such as identity and memorial practices, it was often cases where these are done very differently or not at all that provoked me to ‘see’ the taken-for-granted cultural patterns in my own field-sites. For example, the assumption that prized material products should be preserved is challenged by the assertion among the Igbo of Nigeria that the creativity of artists is only released as the physical art-works decay. This means that the preservation of what might be called ‘material heritage’ should be avoided, thus undermining an assumption that material continuity needs to accompany remembering.

As we will see in the chapters that follow, however, we do not necessarily need to look outside Europe to find alternatives to the more widespread patterns that contribute to the fluid and multivalent European memory complex. These alternatives are thoroughly part of the reality of Europe today and it is to these, as well as the more frequently encountered patterns that this book attends. As such, its intention is neither to affirm Europe, nor to either dissolve it into diversity or to reclaim it through the very idea of its diversity (as has been the attempt in European Union initiatives and slogans of ‘Unity in Diversity’, see McDonald 1996). ‘Europe’ here, then, is primarily a heuristic – and a fairly loose one at that – for exploration. This necessarily entails treating ‘Europe’ not as a self-evident category but as itself variously, and sometimes uncertainly or acrimoniously, defined and characterised. Even with reference to geography, what counts as Europe is unclear and contested: are Russia and Turkey part of Europe or not, for example? From my point of view, the anthropological task is not to adjudicate on such questions but to see these questions as part of what constitutes Europe and to explore the motives and contexts of the different positions taken. Chris Hann points out, for example, that the Urals ‘were nominated for the role of boundary marker only in the middle of the eighteenth century, when Russian intellectuals were determined to prove that the Czarist empire, or at least its capital and historic core, belonged to Europe.
rather than to Asia’ (2012: 88). Framing his own account in terms of ‘Eurasia’,
Hann identifies various continuities and shared histories across Europe and Asia,
and presents these too as challenging any taken-for-granted unity of the former
(and, presumably, also the latter, though this is not stated). He also notes, as
do many other ethnographers working in Europe, that what ‘Europe’ means to
its inhabitants can vary substantially. Susan Gal has observed, for example, that
‘for educated Hungarians, as for most inhabitants of the continent, “Europe”
is less a geographical region or unique civilisation than a symbolic counter of
identity’ (1991: 444). This remains the case, though, as Hann points out, in the
post-socialist era this negative, oppositional understanding of ‘Europe’ may also
be accompanied by a very different, celebratory and enthusiastic ‘rejoining’ of

This is probably also the place to say that this book does not attempt to survey
or even refer to all of the different parts of Europe – that is not its purpose.
Ethnographic research on Europe is itself uneven, with some areas long and
well researched and others relatively neglected; and there are also regional
variations in what themes are given attention, with research on memory being
especially strong in Greece, for example. Even within this, however, my account
is selective, mainly discussing work conducted within the British and North
American anthropological traditions, and especially that of my own research
areas; and within this still further by the narrative that I craft through what
seem to me to be particularly telling examples and arguments. I also draw on
my own research, which has been conducted in the UK, especially in Scotland
and to some extent in England, and in Germany. This provides a range of
contexts for past presencing – both rural and urban, of ‘memory workers’ – i.e.
those officially concerned in various ways with public memory – and ‘ordinary
people’, including tourists and ‘the public’. Moreover, the UK and Germany
provide contrasting national developments, with the UK ‘disuniting’ in the
1990s, as Scotland and to a lesser extent Wales gained greater political autonomy,
while the two Germanys became reunified. In addition, they provide a contrast
in terms of their relationship to ‘Europe’, with ‘Europe’ often being referred to
as ‘elsewhere’ in the UK, whereas a sense of being ‘at the heart of Europe’ and of
being ‘European’ is more usual (though by no means universal) in Germany.\(^{43}\)

**Preludes**

This book is not a history of changing forms of memory and historiography
in Europe – this would be a separate, fascinating, project. There are, however,
certain shifts that have been discussed by historians that are a prelude to the
current memory phenomenon. I have already noted the notion of possessive
individualism, which, it has been argued, became widespread in Europe from
the seventeenth century. This turned memory and the past – and awareness of
the past – into crucial elements of identity, initially personal and then, especially
from the late eighteenth century, national. Then, in a logic of inversion, that so
often seems to operate in the social sphere, a continuous memory or history could itself become a way of proclaiming distinctive, individuated entities. Moreover, in what we might call a logic of extension, which also operates widely, this became a model ever more widely applied – or ‘pirated’, as Benedict Anderson has nicely expressed it (1983: 66). This was especially so from the 1970s, with the development of what is often called ‘identity politics’, in which there was a flourishing of demands for recognition by groups of various kinds on the basis of their identities – usually ethnic but also of other kinds, such as sexuality. Seeking out shared memory and manifesting this in some form of heritage was a ‘natural’ implementation of the model.

The past as a foreign country?

David Lowenthal’s claim that there was a shift in Europe in the late eighteenth century which saw the past increasingly thought about as a ‘foreign country’ (1985) – or set of foreign countries – initially seems to suggest a development that was at odds with that of possessive individualism, which posits the past as part of the continuing (though changing) self. Prior to the eighteenth century, he claims, the past was mostly thought about as ‘much like the present’ (1985: xvi) – as basically a playing out of a universal and unchanging human nature. Antiquity, for example, might be admired as an exemplar of how to do things well, but this was seen as a ‘better’ version of the present rather than as substantively different. Towards the end of the eighteenth century, however, a new perception of the past ‘as a different realm, not just another country but a congeries of foreign lands endowed with unique histories and personalities’ emerged (1985: xvi). Regarding the past as a foreign place, as distinct from the present, would seem to sever the continuities that could make the past substantiate present-day identities. In The Heritage Crusade, Lowenthal concedes the dilemma, acknowledging that the view of the past as fundamentally alien to the present is not easily accommodated with a perception of the past as ‘our own possession’ (1998: xv). His response is to blame historians for the view of the past as ‘foreign and exotic’, as a place that ‘frustrates understanding: its events seem unfathomable, its denizens inscrutable’ (1998: xiv). ‘I suspect’, he then adds, ‘that few take historians’ cautions to heart’: ‘[p]robably most people, most of the time, view the past not as a foreign but as a deeply domestic realm’ and for them heritage is fundamentally concerned with ‘domesticating the past’ (1998: xv).

Certainly, what the compendious The Past is a Foreign Country seems to illustrate above all is a remarkable range of ways of addressing the past; and perhaps he is swayed to overstate the case for difference on account of the tempting quotation from L.P. Hartley that provides his title: ‘The past is a foreign country, they do things differently there’ (quoted in Lowenthal 1985: xvi). Nevertheless, he does show the growth of an idea of the past as worth looking at not just for exemplars of the present but for the more detailed and varied content that
it could provide. Clearly, this is a kind of past that can be appropriated more readily to a model of distinctive histories possessed by distinctive nations. The past here is ‘foreign’ in that it may provide instances of practices that are no longer continued – such as stories and songs collected as part of the swathe of folkloristic collecting that swept Europe with the spread of the nation-state – and in that it can even set puzzles over why things were as they were. The past is separate and different from the present. But it is not incommensurable with it. Rather, it is seen as a precursor of particular presents and owners. Moreover, it is also increasingly understood as requiring investigation as a means not just of knowing what happened then but for understanding and demonstrating present day distinctiveness.

The new practices of conservation and rooting around in actual physical remnants of the past, of which Lowenthal provides ample documentation, show this well. Prior to the nineteenth century, even though Antiquity was widely admired, he explains, ‘its physical remains were in the main neglected or destroyed’ (1985: xvi). Only in the nineteenth century did archaeology grow as a popular practice and as a discipline.

So too did forms of preservation and restoration. According to Svetlana Boym:

In the nineteenth century, for the first time in history, old monuments were restored in their original image. Throughout Italy churches were stripped of their baroque layers and eclectic additions and recreated in the Renaissance image, something that no Renaissance architect would ever imagine doing to a work of antiquity… By the end of the nineteenth century there is a debate between the defenders of complete restoration that proposes to remake historical and artistic monuments of the past in their unity and wholeness, and the lovers of unintentional memorial of the past: ruins, eclectic constructions, fragments that carry “age value”. Unlike total reconstructions, they allowed one to experience historicity affectively, as an atmosphere, a space for reflection on the passage of time. (2001: 15)

If not wholly foreign, then, and worthy of trying to preserve both for the sense of historicity, of the passage of time itself, and as precursor of the present, the past was also in effect made into something visitable. It was, moreover, increasingly regarded as worthy of visiting for what it could ‘tell’. Not an entirely foreign country, then, but a place where at least some things were done differently and that it was worth going to in order to learn from – and, moreover, to learn not only about others but also about one’s self in longue durée.

**The sciences of memory**

The idea that the past provides clues to the present was also strengthened and expanded from the late nineteenth century by what Ian Hacking (1995) calls
the sciences of memory. His discussion is of multiple personality disorder, of which there was an ‘epidemic’ in the 1980s (1995: 8) – a timing that is surely not merely coincident with the memory phenomenon discussed here. He shows how the Lockean forensic notion of personal identity was a necessary precursor to late nineteenth-century sciences of memory and that these in turn established ideas that needed to be in place for the later flourishing of multiple personality disorder. His is a detailed and nuanced account to which I do insufficient justice here. A novel notion that these sciences helped instantiate, however, was what he describes as the idea, ‘dazzling in its implausibility’, that ‘what we have forgotten is what forms our character, our personality, our soul’ (1995: 209, my emphasis). Today, that idea is most readily associated with Freud’s concept of the unconscious – in which form it has been widely popularised throughout Europe and beyond. As Hacking shows, however, the idea predates Freud and suffuses wider scientific ideas about memory as well as Freudian psychoanalysis.

Although Hacking’s account is directly concerned with a medicalised disorder suffered by individuals, the idea that the past can reveal things about ourselves that we do not yet know but that might be shaping our responses and capacities – and that there is a need to develop specialised techniques to access these – has wider resonance. It, too, is one that I suggest can be seen as part of the European memory complex – widespread but far from universally mobilised within European memory cultures.

There is much more that could be discussed as part of the prelude to the memory phenomenon within Europe. This includes inter alia the rise of mass production and consumption – proliferating new material forms and accompanying moral concerns about them; new forms of ‘mechanical reproduction’, as Walter Benjamin called them in 1955 (Benjamin 1972), playing into new concerns with the simulated, real and authentic; migration and urbanisation entangled with searches for community and roots; growing disenchantment with modernity and progress, meaning that the future could not be relied upon to provide the best answer; fissures covered over by the nation-state opening up, and becoming exacerbated by riffing on the compulsion to express distinctive identity in a politics of recognition; and the experience of mass warfare and destruction of human life – and accompanying mourning and memorialising – on a scale never previously encountered in Europe. Many of these will be addressed in the chapters that follow. In these, we turn to anthropological research to venture into what this too can tell us about the memory complex and the memory phenomenon in the memorylands of Europe.

The rest of this book

Memorylands divides roughly into two halves, the first of which introduces a range of anthropological perspectives and history of research on past presencing, together with methodological discussion. The second half, from Chapter 5, deals more directly with specific dimensions of the memory phenomenon.
The division is, however, far from absolute and there is discussion in the first half of topics, such as post-socialist nostalgia, that are also part of the memory phenomenon – as indeed is much that is discussed throughout the book; and many topics introduced in the first half – including methodology, forms and media of narration and past presencing – are further developed in discussions in the second half.

Chapter 2, *Making Histories*, looks at the growth of anthropological interest in questions about the past amongst anthropologists of Europe, including questions of tradition and the invention of tradition, and of historical consciousness. A major focus of work has been on the making of history; and, in this chapter, this is discussed through a range of examples from both earlier work and more recent, the latter including attempts to construct European history, traditions and historical consciousness, the last drawn from my own fieldwork in Germany.

Chapter 3, *Telling the Past*, takes a more methodological tack to discussion of anthropological interest in past presencing, including exploration of similarities and differences between anthropology and history; and the difficulty for anthropologists of dealing with temporality – what I call the multitemporal challenge. The chapter gives particular attention to how the past is told and what the very forms of telling might themselves indicate. It also provides examples of various experimental anthropological work that tackles the multitemporal challenge in novel ways.

Not all past presencing, however, takes narrative form, as is acknowledged in various chapters but addressed most extensively in Chapter 4, *Feeling the Past*. This looks directly at questions of affect, materiality, embodiment and place and discusses a range of insightful ethnographic research that seeks to explore the implications of these for memory and other relationships with the past. In particular, it considers ‘nostalgia’ – a longing for the past; and especially the emergence of nostalgia for the Socialist past in post-Socialist Europe.

Chapter 5, *Selling the Past*, looks at one of the major memory phenomenon debates – that concerning the commodification of the past, or what is sometimes called ‘the heritage industry’, and accompanying concern about authenticity. To explore the questions in depth, the chapter includes an extended case-study of a heritage centre from my fieldwork in the Isle of Skye. Questions of materiality raised in the previous chapter, as well as alternative conceptualisations of ‘heritage’, are further developed here.

Chapter 6, *Musealisation*, looks at the memory phenomenon from the perspective of the growth of museumisation or heritagisation of everyday and folk life. It charts the growth of these forms of past presencing and engages with a range of influential theories about the museum phenomenon. Through another case study from the Isle of Skye – that acts as a partner to that in the previous chapter – it proposes some more specific concepts and an alternative, more reflexive, perspective on what is involved.

Like the two preceding chapters, Chapter 7, *Transcultural Heritage*, has a central focus on cultural agencies involved in past presencing: here, especially at
monuments/public sculpture and museums. Given that these played significant roles in the nineteenth-century articulation of bounded, homogeneous identities, especially national identities, and associated histories and heritage, this chapter explores whether they are capable of addressing and even encouraging more fluid, multiple and transcultural memories and identities. The discussion here focuses especially upon the transcultural in relation to migration from outside Europe, and includes debates about heritage in relation to multiculturalism, citizenship, Islam and the veil as heritage. How far transcultural forms indicate a transformation in the nature of the European public spheres is explored through a number of innovative examples.

The transcultural theme is continued in Chapter 8, Cosmopolitan Memory, which addresses arguments that the nation-state is receding as a frame of memory, replaced by more cosmopolitan memory forms. The Holocaust has been a major focus for this claim and this chapter charts the expansion of Holocaust heritage as well as exploring arguments about cosmopolitan memory through a range of anthropological research. I won’t give the game away here about what it concludes but will note that, as throughout the book, anthropological research throws up new perspectives and complexities, challenging existing theorising.

Culminatory narratives, ending in futurology, are a familiar strand in the European memory complex repertoire. The final chapter, The Future of Memory – and Forgetting, does not escape its cultural conventions … entirely.
For our house is open, there are no keys in the doors, and invisible guests come in and out at will.

Czesław Miłosz

Given that historically heritage has been entangled with attempts to forge and maintain bounded, homogeneous identities, especially of the nation-state, a major question is whether heritage is capable of accommodating other kinds of identities, especially those that might be considered, variously, ‘hybrid’, ‘open’ or ‘transcultural’. This question has arisen especially in the face of recognition of heterogeneity within nations arising from immigration – from other parts of Europe and, especially, from outside. This has prompted further questions concerning whether it is possible to draw on memory and heritage to form new identity stories that include rather than exclude cultural diversity and ‘mixed’ culture. Is it possible to have a common heritage and a ‘multi-heritage’ simultaneously? Are some forms of past presencing more or less amenable to incorporation within a more ‘inclusive’ national identity? And can or will new identity formations and memories displace or be felt in the same ways as those that preceded them? These and similar questions arise too in relation European identity and formation of a European public sphere, as noted in Chapter 1. Can and should a ‘European heritage’ be identified that transcends national and other diversities within Europe? Are there alternatives to replicating national-style models at another scale? In many ways, these questions probe at the very nature and significance of heritage, for they open up examination of the usually assumed consonance between past, people, location and culture, especially material culture, and draw attention to possible alternative ways of past presencing.
In this chapter I explore these questions primarily in relation to debates concerning migrant minorities within nation-states. Numerous projects and initiatives, including exhibitions, that variously address migrant identity and its relationship to memory and heritage, usually with a view to forging greater ‘tolerance’ and senses of ‘inclusion’, are currently underway in cities throughout Europe. As we will see, these may operate within the existing identity-heritage model and may even unwittingly confound the ‘inclusion problem’ that they set out to address. Others, however, seek to rework heritage to create new possibilities for affiliation. In the chapter I look at a range of forms of heritage but pay particular attention to tangible material heritage in public space, especially that of museums and monuments. I do so partly because these were such significant forms in the earlier formation of national identities and are distinctive assemblages – with their own particular ‘shapes’, possibilities and limits – that deserve attention in their own right. In addition, they are not just forms but are also persisting physical presences in – and even constitutors of – public space, and in the case of museums are often repositories of existing ‘heritage’ whose very existence can have implications for future configurations of the past. Furthermore, they have been and are sites of some significant experiments and contests concerning transcultural heritage in the new Europe.

**Transcultural and other terms**

The term ‘transcultural’ is not unproblematic and before continuing I should explain my use of the term and consider some others that I also use or that might be employed. ‘Transcultural’ denotes a crossing and mixing of cultures. In assemblage terms, it involves bringing together elements from different cultures and fusing these in what becomes a new form, though it may retain identifiable elements of previous assemblages. Problematic here is the assumption of already existing ‘cultures’. The idea that the world is divided into distinct, relatively autonomous ‘cultures’ has been widely criticised, especially in anthropology – a discipline that historically has also played a key role in forming this conception. Regarding culture as divided into a set of ‘islands of difference’ in this way has been argued to be a particular construction, born especially out of a nation-statist way of viewing the world that became dominant in Europe in the eighteenth century, as noted in earlier chapters.

Clearly, it is methodologically important to be able to perceive ways of forming values, organising lives and forging senses of belonging and so forth that do not map onto ‘cultures’ as they are often popularly talked about, which frequently means those of nationality or ethnicity. At the same time, however, this particular way of thinking about ‘cultures’ is widespread within Europe (as indeed elsewhere to varying extents) and, as such, is part of its lived reality, shaping events, contests and futures. It is an element in the European memory complex – a particular constellation of intermeshed ideas and practices – that also shapes the memory phenomenon. One of the difficulties that anthropologists
have faced when trying to avoid using the term ‘cultures’ is that of finding ways of still talking about differences encountered and the often recurrent patterns and congruences that may coalesce around what they would previously have more comfortably referred to as ‘cultures’.

In using the term ‘transcultural’, then, I want to give recognition to developments that seek to move across and between what are in everyday European practice perceived as significant cultural differences. This may also include the ‘transnational’ – that which crosses national differences, though it should be noted that the term ‘transnational’ may also refer to particular political or economic developments. Within Europe, then, the transcultural includes that which seeks to mix, fuse or transcend national cultural differences, including developments that seek to identify cross-border regional similarities or pan-European. We saw some examples of this in Chapter 2, especially, and will see more in the following chapter. Also, however, and as I focus on in particular in this chapter, the term can refer to – and is used in initiatives concerning – the mixing and fusion of ‘cultures’ within nation-states resulting from migration. Here I look at this especially in relation to migration from outside Europe. I do so largely because this has become such a major focus of interest and anxiety in contemporary Europe. Many of the issues that it raises, however, also apply to varying extents to other kinds of transcultural concerns and initiatives.

Also used to describe processes of cultural mixing and the new cultural forms that may emerge are terms such as ‘syncretic’/’syncretism’, ‘creole’/’creolisation’, ‘fusion’ and ‘hybrid’/’hybridity’. Again, there has been criticism of their presupposition of pre-existing ‘pure’ or ‘non-creolised’ cultures and identities that exist prior to their mixing. The term ‘hybridity’ has been subject to particular critique for its biological origins, which some see as giving legitimacy to biologised understandings of race or find unsuitable given that ‘hybrids’ in biology are usually defined as sterile – as the end of a line. Others, however, seek to recuperate it as a term to describe mixing that transgresses established boundaries, producing challenging new forms in the process. Here, I treat these terms as broadly synonymous with ‘transcultural’, and seek primarily to examine cultural initiatives and forms that set out to mix – to varying degrees – what are seen as ‘cultures’.

In European public cultural policy and practice, the term that is in most widespread use is ‘multicultural’. This has been widely adopted to describe and give recognition to the fact that many parts of Europe, especially its larger cities, are home to people who are themselves, or whose parents or grandparents, came from other parts of the world and who may have various different cultural practices. Often used with the suffix ‘ism’, ‘multiculturalism’ describes a political position in which cultural differences are given recognition and allowed to flourish within the nation-state. The idea of multiculturalism has received significant criticism, as I will discuss further below. Even more strongly than ‘transcultural’, ‘multicultural’ contains a premise of distinct cultures – but unlike the former, ‘multicultural’ contains no suggestion that mixing is
possible but further confirms the notion of cultures as comparable to separate species, as Ghassan Hage suggests in his description of multiculturalism as ‘zoological’ (2000). Yet the political philosopher Charles Taylor (1992) points out that the idea of cultures (like individuals) as being distinct and in need of expressing their distinctiveness has, since the eighteenth century, evolved as the taken-for-granted way of being in modern societies; and that the politics of multiculturalism seek to create conditions in which this is permitted to all, or the majority of, self-identifying cultural groups rather than just to a single national identity.

‘Transcultural’ and ‘transnational’ are sometimes used more or less as substitutes for ‘post-national’. This is based in an idea that the national is declining in significance for people’s identification in the face of increasing cultural mixing. Yet, as we will see below, in this chapter and more directly still in the next, transcultural developments do not necessarily lead to a fundamental unsettling of the national, and for this reason it is important not to conflate these terms. In recent discussion, ‘cosmopolitan’ and ‘cosmopolitanism’ have come to dominate discussion, and these too are often understood as challenges to nation-statist forms of identification, as I discuss further in the following chapter. In choosing to frame this chapter in terms of the transcultural, however, and the following in terms of the cosmopolitan, my intention is to look here particularly at developments that are articulated as a mixing and fusion of cultural forms, and in the following at developments that have been understood as oriented to more commonly human concerns, seeking to further escape anchorage of nation and location. This is not to say, however, that they either succeed or that there is not a good deal in common between them.

National identity, monuments and museums

Previous chapters have already discussed the spread within Europe of a model of single ‘person-like’ national identities, with identifiable heritages and memories of their own. Key cultural forms assisting in performing this – both of which proliferated alongside the spread of the nation-state in Europe in the late-eighteenth and nineteenth centuries – were national monuments and museums. Given their importance in helping to instantiate particular models of identity and heritage, they deserve attention, not least as a basis for exploring how far they might be capable of operating otherwise.

The term ‘monument’, according to Andrew Butterfield, comes from the Latin noun monumentum, which is derived from the Latin verb moneo. The primary meaning of moneo is “to bring to the notice of, to remind, or to tell of.” Monumentum consequently is something with this function, specifically something that stimulates the remembrance of a person or an event.

(Butterfield 2003: 28)
The national monuments that proliferated during nation-making thus served to demarcate particular events, individuals and locations as especially significant to the nation’s memory; and to materialise this in durable form. Some took the form of sculptures of individuals – almost invariably national heroes whose qualities were taken as iconic of those of the nation itself. This personification simultaneously substantiated the idea of nations as having distinct, person-like identities.

The museum – whose modern publicly-open form only began at the same time as the nation-state – also acted as an agency and site for identifying worthy heritage, in effect, creating three-dimensional identity-stories for the public. It also helped make the very idea of singular, bounded national identities, with their own heritages and cultures, imaginable. This not only operated through the display of things produced by, or discovered within, the nation, though these generally took pride-of-place, but also, typically, through objects from many parts of the world. This was the case in national museums of many kinds, including the encyclopaedic (generalist) museum, as well as more subject-specific kinds of museums, such as those of natural history or art. In ethnographic museums it was usually only the stuff of others on display. In part, this display of objects from other parts of the world served to illuminate the nation’s ‘mastery’ over a large geographical area, thus substantiating the nation as a significant international player. In addition, however, the material culture from other places was usually displayed in a manner that exemplified – and substantiated through objects – the discrete diversity of peoples, thus making ‘objective’ a particular model of the world as largely divided into territorially and culturally distinct peoples.

Another important capacity of heritage, monuments and museums was to gather people – to attract people to come to them. Of course, not all succeeded in this as well as those involved in their making might have hoped. As Jonas Frykman writes, ‘Monuments are a strange kind of material culture with lives of their own’ (2004: 110) and much the same can be said of museums. But what monuments and museums nevertheless helped effect was the assembling of a public, an act that has been argued to be central to both forming the idea of a collectivity of citizens and to creating senses and accompanying affects of national belonging. In the case of monuments especially, this may operate in conjunction with rituals – affectively dense collective events that help individuals to feel connection with the nation or other demarcated collectivity. But even the looser, though orderly, gathering of people by museums could encourage a sense of having common interests and ambitions with those of other unknown visitors. This was also fostered by the museum’s capacity to put the viewer into a privileged distanced relationship with the displays – as an objective spectator of ‘an external object-world’ (Mitchell 1988: 21) that Mitchell, drawing on Heidegger, describes as ‘the world as exhibition’. Capable visitors were, thus, envisaged as able to step outside of culture and view it with detachment, even while feeling strongly attached to their own. In doing so, they also became part of a self-aware collective of fellow citizens.
Given how much the form of monuments, and perhaps even more so of museums, was entangled in shaping a particular kind of identity, public and even certain notions of objectivity, perhaps they, and the heritage that they preserve, are too inextricably entangled in ‘old’ forms of identity and ways of seeing and feeling to be able to express ‘new’ ones. Are they too solid and static to express more fluid or volatile identities? If museum collections are in a sense the materialisations of memories as heritage linked to specific identities, then this also raises the question of whether museums and the heritage inevitably serve as ‘brakes’ or ‘limits’ on identity reconfiguration. Before exploring this in relation to some examples, we need to turn briefly to debates about how and why there might be – or need to be – changes in identity formations.

**Identities, culture and heritage**

The idea that existing identities and/or models of identity might be becoming obsolete or inadequate to contemporary realities has been widespread in social and cultural theory, especially since the 1990s. Generally, the idea forms part of an argument about social and cultural transformations glossed by the label ‘globalisation’. Put simply, the argument is that existing identifications and perhaps even the bounded, homogeneous model of identity itself are challenged by increased global movement – of people, goods, ideas, symbols, images and so forth – enabled and even provoked by modern information and communication technologies, and also by the movement of people around the world, either temporarily through tourism and travel or more long-term through migration. In some theorisations, this contributes to greater identity-fluidity, as individuals are increasingly enabled or forced to sever themselves from the contexts of their birth; and in some it leads to increasingly fragmented or fusion identities as individuals selectively make themselves up in the changing and multiple worlds that they encounter – materially and virtually. Culture, in these perspectives, usually becomes less organically connected to particular groups of people – as it does in the identity-heritage complex that we have discussed in earlier chapters – but becomes instead more ‘mixable’ or ‘hybrid’, or even a set of symbols or lifestyle choices from which individuals make their own particular selections.

National identities have been a focus of much discussion of this sort, with some arguing that the multiple various allegiances of migrants and those whose parents or grandparents were migrants – who may, variously and depending on the particular national laws, become national citizens – challenges the idea of a nation-state as mono-cultural or populated by those who share a single heritage. National mono-culturalism has also been challenged by social history, pointing out the heterogeneity of heritage and expanding definitions of heritage, especially in class terms. The expansion of the local, industrial and ‘everyday’ heritage discussed earlier is linked to this. Furthermore, ethno-nationalism – demands ranging from increased recognition to autonomy and separatisms by...
self-claimed ‘indigenous minorities’ – has also been argued to be a return of difference previously suppressed or unacknowledged by existing nation-states. Examples in Europe include the Basques, Welsh, Catalans, Sami, and Bretons. Yet, while these show the existence and/or persistence of difference within nation-states, they do not challenge the national model fundamentally. On the contrary, as shown even more dramatically by the many ethnonationalist groups that have succeeded in gaining national sovereignty, as have those of the former Yugoslavia and Soviet Union, they are premised upon models of bounded nations with their own distinctive culture and heritage. As we saw in Chapter 2, European identity is also often modelled on that of the nation-state and so does not necessarily challenge the identity-heritage model itself.

The extent to which migration leads either to shifts in individual identities of migrants, as they seek to forge an identity in relation to their various ‘homes’, or identities of non-migrants or society as a whole, surely varies according to particular circumstances, including specific longings, opportunities, hostilities and resources for imagining alternatives. It is by no means assured, however, that either greater cultural mixing or a revision of existing identity formations will result. In an influential argument in 1995, Verena Stolcke argued that what she calls ‘cultural fundamentalism’ – ‘a rhetoric of inclusion and exclusion that emphasises the distinctiveness of cultural identity, traditions, and heritage among groups and assumes the closure of this culture by territory’ (1995: 2) – has increased in Europe since the 1970s. Deployed especially by right-wing politicians, she sees this as largely a function of, and certainly as supporting, ‘mounting animosity against immigrants’ (ibid.). In other words, an outcome of the increased movement of peoples is increased demarcation and separation of cultures rather than cultural mixing or weakening of boundaries. Moreover, this analysis highlights the memory phenomenon – a phenomenon that we have already seen is over-determined – as giving service to this maintenance of boundaries and the status quo, thus supporting racism and xenophobia. While ‘culture’ and ‘heritage’ are sometimes used synonymously, especially in these debates, heritage is potentially a still more powerful tool of exclusion. Culture is usually considered learnable, at least over generations, whereas heritage is much more emphatically something that stretches back, that speaks of where you have come from.

**Multiculturalism**

Stolcke’s discussion of the rise of culturally fundamentalist rhetoric, which she sees as motivated by existing European nations (and also Europe as a whole) asserting their own boundaries, rights and cultural exclusivity, can also be usefully considered in relation to policies of multiculturalism and subsequent developments. As she notes, governmental policy on cultural diversity varies markedly between European countries; in particular, she compares what she calls ‘the French model’, which aims at ‘assimilation and civic incorporation’
and the ‘Anglo-Saxon’ one, which allows cultural diversity within a broad aim of ethnic integration (1995: 9). The latter has also formed a base for official policies of multiculturalism that not merely tolerate diversity but encourage the idea of the nation as constituted by a mosaic of different cultures. On the one hand, this gives official recognition to cultural difference and grants a degree of cultural autonomy to the variously recognised ‘cultures’. On the other, however, it is often argued that multicultural policies only recognise some elements of culture – usually an identikit of ‘safe’ cultural markers, such as dress and food, rather than potentially divisive differences of practice or difficult heritage. Moreover, it can be said to be an extension of cultural fundamentalism itself, albeit usually without the territorial dimension, though the latter is sometimes realised through an idea of particular ‘communities’ or urban neighbourhoods. As such, multicultural fundamentalism also excludes more untidy or complex identity formations and memories.

Multicultural policies, enacted through a multitude of local practices, vary widely across and within European countries as ethnographic research has shown. Such research has often highlighted contradictions of practice. In Berlin, for example, which as we saw in the Chapter 5 is increasingly being marketed as ‘multicultural’, Kira Kosnick argues that ‘the management of its “really existing” ethno-cultural diversity’ (2009: 162) often belies its ambitions. Her examples include those who look to be of immigrant backgrounds being turned away from using the toilets at the House of World Cultures – toilets that many others who are also just visiting the nearby park but are ‘stereotypical embodiments of non-immigrant Germans’ are permitted to use (2009: 161). In a study of a multicultural project to bring artists from Istanbul to Berlin, Banu Karaca describes them feeling frustrated to be ‘put in the position of social workers’ rather than artists, and to be treated as ‘representatives of their supposed communities, and by extension “their cultures”, rather than as individual artists’ (2009: 35). Several told her they would avoid taking part in such projects in future.

There have also been many moments – some long – of ‘backlash’ against multicultural policies, including recent proclamations by the German Chancellor, Angela Merkel, and the British Prime Minister, David Cameron, that multiculturalism has failed. Instances of unrest in areas of high proportions of the population with immigrant backgrounds – as in riots in Paris in 2007 and several summers since – have fuelled heated debate across many parts of Europe about which approaches hold most promise for generating senses of ‘inclusion’. In some countries, most notably the Netherlands, which long held a reputation for being especially accommodating of difference, there has been a marked turn to attempting to reinstate senses of affiliation to the nation. Oskar Verkaik dates the questioning of multicultural approaches in the Netherlands to 2000, propelled partly by politicians such as Pim Fortuyn, who opposed further Muslim immigration into the Netherlands, arguing that Muslim refusal to recognise gay and women’s rights threatened Dutch society, and its very liberalism. The assassination of Fortuyn in 2002, and then of film-maker
Theo van Gogh – who was also highly critical of Islam – further fuelled debate and the generation of what Verkaik calls ‘the new nationalism’. Unlike earlier nationalisms, he suggests, this form of nationalism is ‘primarily directed against internal migrant Others, especially Muslims’ (2010: 71). It strongly emphasises ‘Dutch culture’, seeking out and defining this through ‘state-led projects, such as the creation of a Dutch historical “canon” and a new national history museum’ (2010: 70) and the creation of a ‘naturalisation ceremony’ for those seeking to become Dutch citizens. As Verkaik describes, creating this ceremony involved ‘invent[ing] key symbols for the elusive concept of “Dutchness”’ (2010: 74) – a tricky task as the Dutch do not attach much significance to their flag or national anthem and ‘symbols like the tulip were felt to be so commercialised as to no longer have any cachet’ (ibid.). The job was largely left to local bureaucrats who came up with many creative solutions, including the following.

In various places new citizens were treated to licorice – not always a big success – or sandwiches made with peanut butter. One municipality served Brussels sprouts and boerenkool – a peasants’ dish made of kale and potatoes. Another took three new citizens – members of a family from Afghanistan – to a dairy farm; elsewhere there was a visit to a windmill … In one place, a box of various flowers was brought in and all guests were invited to pick a flower to his or her liking, a gesture symbolizing the multifaceted nature of Dutch national identity. Elsewhere one could have one’s picture taken standing next to a life-sized image of the soccer hero Johan Cruyff …

While many of the bureaucrats involved in both creating and implementing these ceremonies had left-wing and pro-immigrant sympathies, and often began with an ironic stance on the naturalisation processes, Verkaik shows how the repetitive nature of the ceremonies and their affective dimension came to make the bureaucrats themselves much more accepting of the new nationalism than they were previously. As for the new citizens, what the procedures primarily taught them, he argues, is ‘Dutch people’s preoccupation with their own culture’ (2010: 79) and also ‘that culture, in its essentialist form, matters’ (2010: 80).

If multicultural practice, then, may end up reinforcing essentialist and fundamentalist visions of culture, are there other approaches that might transcend this? One possibility is to focus on that which crosses cultural boundaries, mixing, fusing and hybridising in the process – or to create situations and practices that encourage this. Below, I examine some selected attempts to do this, especially through the cultural forms of the museum exhibition and what might possibly constitute a modern monument, and at the same time discuss the ways in which certain practices – in this case that of Islamic veiling – may become a focus for debates about the possible flexibility or inflexibility of heritage itself.
Veiling and unveiling heritage

In 2007, a new statue was erected in the public park of the Kunsthalle (Art Gallery) in Vienna. While calling the statue a ‘monument’ is a partial misnomer, in that it was not produced as part of a clearly instrumental civic process of remembrance, it nevertheless served as a reminder of a particular presence and associated history in public space. As a statue on a plinth, it partly shared the monumental format of the solitary hero – though in this case it was not elevated as were most nineteenth century monumental figures – as well as that of the classical nude statue. Created by German sculptor, Olaf Metzel, the statue was a nude of a veiled woman (Göle 2009). Its title, *Turkish Delight*, indicated its intended ethnic reference, if this was not already sufficiently clear in a city with a significant Turkish presence. If nineteenth-century national monuments were largely publicly uncontested, community-affirming insertions into public space, however, that of this statue was rather different. It immediately generated considerable public controversy and after just a few months was pulled down and subsequently removed from the park.

**FIGURE 7.1** *Turkish Delight*, by Olaf Metzel, 2006, in the park of Kunsthalle Wien, 2007. Photograph by Wolfgang Woessner © Kunsthalle Wien public space
In a detailed analysis of the events, Nilüfer Göle argues that ‘a new European public culture is emerging as a result of the encounter with issues concerning Islam’, in which ‘what is at stake is the “indigenization” of Islam, its re-territorialization in Europe’ (2009: 278) and ‘cultural struggles over memory and visibility’ (2009: 291). Debates beginning in 2002 about Turkey’s possible accession to the European Union intensified these struggles over Islam’s re-territorialisation, bringing out a usually implicit but sometimes explicit ‘equation between Europe and Christianity’ (2009: 282), with Islam – and often specific symbols such as the veil – acting as an ‘amplifier’ of cultural difference more generally (2009: 292). Göle argues that neither multiculturalism, which has problems such as those discussed above, nor post-colonialism, which does not sufficiently grasp the mutuality of the processes involved as well as being not literally historically correct in the case of the Turkish presence in Austria, provides a conceptual handle on the processes involved. Instead, she uses the term Anwandlungen to describe what she argues are the mutually interpenetrating ‘sense[s] of change of the self, and other, [and] the metamorphoses that ensue from proximity’ (2009: 285). In the case of Turkish Delight, what is involved is not only change amongst the Turkish migrants but a reworking of Viennese, and broader European, public space, in which art constitutes a ‘privileged interface’ between ‘different publics and cultures’ (2009: 278). In addition, art allows for the production and consumption of aesthetic forms that may themselves seek to express, explore or provoke the transcultural and hybrid.

Turkish Delight is a hybrid form in its mixing of the classical nude with what has become one of the most visible and contested markers of Islam – the veil. Sculptor Olaf Metzel intended to provoke in his depiction of woman, naked except for the veil covering her hair – a depiction that affronts Islam’s prohibition on public revelation of the female body – and thus, as the Kunsthalle’s website explains, to draw attention to ‘the precarious relationship between Orient and Occident … and the commercial exploitation of the feminine body in Western media-driven mass society’.14 As Göle notes, the statue is not sexually provocative (2009: 288) but, with its downcast eyes, is rather demure and understated, though its title suggests orientalised sensory temptation. She argues, however, that despite the fact that the sculptor is male and not Turkish, and although the representation of a veiled woman naked, alone in a public park, is not a depiction of literal reality, the statue nevertheless expresses some of the contradictions and tensions experienced by Turkish women in European cities, who may feel alone, ‘caught between past and present [and] conflicting symbolic orders’ (2009: 290). As such, the statue should not be dismissed as a Western artist’s perhaps rather crass or naïve provocation but understood as a more complexly transcultural form. Likewise, the toppling of the statue by two men (probably) from Vienna’s migrant Turkish community should not necessarily be seen as a straightforward act of rejection of an ‘outside perspective’ by that ‘community’ as a whole. Turkish Delight can be regarded, then, as an expression of Anwandlungen – a ‘cultural intermingling’ in which there is an
attempt to convey the new cultural fusions and contradictions of contemporary European heritage. Turkish women are now part of Vienna’s public space and Turkish Delight more or less officially acknowledges this, inscribing it into the city’s sculptural public heritage. At least, it did until the statue was toppled and removed. In this sense, the sculpture performed a monumental function. But this was a rather different performance from that of the nineteenth century monument, both in its attempts at cultural fusion and lack of stylistic grandeur; and in its form of a generalised, though gender and ethnically specified, figure rather than a particular hero or icon for ‘everyman’ emulation. While traditional monumental sculptural forms continue to be built for public space within Europe today – as we saw, for example, in the second of the monuments built for the 1956 Uprising in Budapest (discussed in the Prologue) – there is also a search for new forms, that partly borrow from earlier forms but also specifically strive to avoid certain features of earlier monumentality. Often abstract, and perhaps also defying enduring physical presence – as with many ‘counter-monuments’, discussed in the following chapter – and sometimes more muted and provocative figurations, as in this case, these not only question the idea of who and what should be remembered in public space but also the role of public art. Rather than seeking to establish, confirm and celebrate, or perhaps even, as some argue, contribute to forgetting and ‘glorious anesthesia’ (Stewart 2005: 336), new memorial forms are as likely to question, unsettle and provoke. In doing so, they constitute public space as one of debate rather validation, as ‘made up of, and constituted by and through, the articulation of different perspectives’ (Göle 2009: 291).

Within this, memorial forms in the cityscape – newly created heritage – become important stimuli for bringing interlocutors together, not necessarily to agree but to engage in some kind of transcultural interaction that in effect creates a public sphere, and in which the role of public art, memory and the very nature of public – and European – space themselves become the subject of debate.

The veil as Islamic heritage

Continuing the debate, in the year after the erection and then toppling of Turkish Delight, an exhibition was shown in Vienna’s Kunsthalle: ‘Footnotes on veiling: Mahrem’. Partly organised by Nilüfer Göle, the exhibition came from Istanbul and included work mainly by women artists from a wide range of different countries reflecting in many different ways on veiling. Its title, Mahrem, means ‘interior, sacred, gendered space’ (Göle 2009: 286), thus invoking the veil not as a generalised symbol of Islam but as part of a more subjective experience. As Pnina Werbner points out, references to ‘the veil’, understood as a symbol of Islam, are widespread in public debate, so homogenising veiling practices and failing to acknowledge alternative and often more complex motives for veiling among women (2007). Not only does the term ‘veil’ carry a different semantic load than does ‘headscarf’, it also obscures variations between the different
forms that it takes, ranging from the light *dupatta* – usually of chiffon and only partially covering much hair – to full covering of the face and body, as in the case of the *burqa*. While the ‘meaning’ and ‘significance’ of the veil are most often discussed in public policy in terms of the submission of women to strict tenets of Islam – with the degree of veiling being equated with the degree of submission – and, as such, as a matter of whether ‘tradition’ or ‘modernity’ prevails, Werbner explains that the subjective motivations may be otherwise, and often ‘complex and … situational’ (2007: 173). In general, she argues, the significance of the veil for women is more concerned with the articulation of modesty and piety than a religious statement. As such, bans on its presence in public space – as in French schools – become matters of individual human rights. Moreover, she argues, veiling can accord women more rather than less agency.

On the basis of her fieldwork with Punjabi women in England, she writes about how some of the younger women adopt ‘stricter’ forms of veiling than their mothers, and that this performance of greater religious observance gives them greater agency in choosing their own marriage partners and determining their own destinies more generally. Many such younger women argue that traditional Islam allows women greater freedom and they use their veiling as a way of entering public space in ways that allow them to do so with fewer restrictions than they could otherwise (Werbner 2007: 175–6). Likewise, in Germany, Ruth Mandel reports some Turkish women choosing to take up wearing headscarves to signal their identity as Turkish – and not German, an identity that also carries significance as a statement of what they see as more honourable sexual mores (2008: Chapter 11).

As is evident from examples provided by both Werbner and Mandel, ‘tradition’ is frequently invoked in these debates. This is often ‘tradition’ as an outmoded, unreflexive practice (see also Ghodsee 2008, 2010 for Bulgaria). Not only is this sometimes deployed in public debate, especially in relation to women’s agency, it may also be used, as Werbner shows, by the younger ‘more Islamic’ women who argue that their parents are just following rural traditions rather than ‘more correct’ forms of Islamic heritage (2007: 171). At the same time, however, describing veiling as a matter of ‘tradition’ or ‘heritage’ can be effective in contexts in which even a weak form of multiculturalism operates, for ‘tradition’ and ‘heritage’ are automatically regarded as worthy of respect and retention. It is perhaps partly for this reason that the European media often contain commentaries about veiling among certain communities as relatively recent or as not fully endorsed by the Qur’an. Similarly, fashionable veils – the market in which has massively increased (Navaro-Yashin 2002) – or the wearing of them with fashionable clothing, are also sometimes taken as a sign of inauthenticity, and, therefore, as not requiring the respect that heritage should usually be accorded (Mandel 2008: 309). What might otherwise be regarded as a form of transcultural accommodation, then, is often excluded by the invocation of heritage discourse. Yet as various scholars point out, veiling practices and meanings have long been subject to change, not least across generations, as
Transcultural heritage
indeed is so often the case for traditions more generally. The unwillingness to acknowledge the veil as legitimately changing, however, is to regard it as part of an inflexible tradition, characterised by an outmoded and repressive gender relations. It is an element of the same processes of demarcating sharp boundaries around Islam that Karin Nieuwkerk describes in her analysis of the experience of Dutch women converts to Islam. These women all related experiences of being defined by non-Muslims as ‘foreign’ – in myriad, sometimes stark and sometimes subtle, ways – despite their Dutch citizenship and upbringing. Veiling, in particular, intensified the reactions to them; van Nieuwkerk arguing that for most Dutch ‘the veil is the symbol of foreignness’ and ‘of female degradation’ (2004: 242). She sees this as understood by the Dutch not just as a contravention of ‘Dutch’ qualities but of ‘a kind of universal non-identity… consisting of tolerance, freedom and emancipation with which converts are evaluated and considered to fall short since they are Muslim’ (2004: 244). Likewise, in an analysis of public discourse surrounding ‘Islamophobic’ incidents involving veiling in Germany, Beverly M. Weber observes that the women’s agency as citizens is underreported in the media: ‘[t]he headscarf [thus]… acts as the marker of cultural otherness that prohibits their participation is a democratic public sphere’ (2012: 114). The result is that ‘[t]he subject of democracy remains abstracted and unmarked but firmly “European”’ (2012: 114).

While veiling acts as an object chargé (Mandel 2008: 294) and an ‘amplifier’ of difference (Göle 2009: 292), and is paradoxically condemned on the one hand for its inflexibility and on the other for changing, there are cultural initiatives to highlight its variability, multiplicity, and emotional as well as religious significance, as in the Mahrem exhibition. Such an exhibition was just one of a growing number of interventions in public space that seek to address questions of cultural difference – framed variously in terms of providing greater knowledge in the hope of fostering greater understanding, or personalising abstract issues as a means of generating empathy. In the next section, I look at one of these – a new museum gallery – framed explicitly as transcultural.

**Transcultural heritage in the museum**

The *Transcultural Galleries* opened in Bradford, in the city art gallery – Cartwright Hall – in 1997. It is, perhaps, not surprising that this early and unusually explicit attempt to both represent and encourage particular – ‘transcultural’ – identity formations should open in a city with one of the highest population proportions of extra-European migrant background within Europe. The collection which was based in the galleries was what its curator, Nima Poovaya Smith, refers to as ‘the first non-colonial collection of its kind in the country’ (Poovaya Smith 1998: 112). Appointed in 1986, her remit was to build and display a collection of art from the Indo-Pakistan subcontinent at. Cartwright Hall is a purpose-built public art gallery, opened in 1904, in a Baroque style building set in a public park. Much of its internal space is fairly typical of a nineteenth-century public
museum, with most of the art on display being European, with a strong emphasis on British work (including art with a local and regional emphasis). The new exhibitionary identity ‘experiment’ thus took place within a space designed for an earlier civic, largely monocultural, identity project.

Bradford’s largest migrant population is from South Asia, having developed during the 1960s and 1970s, and, by the early 1990s, constituting approximately 81,000 out of a total of a population of 484,000. The largest group of these migrants came from Pakistan and Kashmir but with many too from other parts of India and Bangladesh, and so including a range of religious affiliations – Islam, Hinduism and Sikhism – and languages: Urdu, Hindi Bangladeshi and Gujarati. In addition, the city has significant minorities from Africa and the Caribbean; and within the city’s ‘white’ population, Bradford has a history of immigration beginning with the Irish who came from the 1820s and the Germans, Poles, Ukrainians and Italians who followed them. During the 1970s racial tensions – usually framed as either ‘Asian’ or ‘black’ versus ‘white’ – grew, partly in relation to growing unemployment; and the early 1980s saw race riots there, as well as in various other British cities, and a flourishing of reports on ‘race-relations’. In 1989, a copy of Salman Rushdie’s *The Satanic Verses* (1988) was publicly burnt here, bringing Bradford forcibly to global attention as a site of cultural and religious passion and fundamentalism.

The decision to fund the building of a collection of South Asian art was made, then, against this backdrop of increasingly antagonistic racialised city politics; with the intention that it would help ameliorate the situation. Drawing on the museum’s legitimacy-giving function, the inclusion of South Asian culture in this key civic institution was acknowledged as a means of demonstrating the city’s acceptance of the inclusion of South Asians within its own patrimony and public spaces. It was also seen as a way of showing the non-South Asian population the richness of South Asian heritage and so, it was hoped, of fostering greater respect and, through accompanying educational information, of increasing understanding of cultural difference. At the same time, however, exhibiting South Asian material culture was also hoped to act as a magnet for bringing South Asians – who at that time rarely visited Cartwright Hall – into the museum, and, thus, more fully into the community of fellow citizens that museums help to instantiate.

There was clearly a risk, however, that the museal logic of culture would act to reify South-Asian culture as an exotic ‘other’ presence within the galleries. This can be seen as part of a broader dilemma of the politics of recognition and of social inclusion, which themselves typically work with a model of discrete ‘cultures’, often through the trope of ‘community’ (Çağlar 1997). In a robust critique of the politics of social inclusion, Irit Rogoff argues that

> this infinitely expansive inclusiveness is actually grounded in an unrevised notion of the museum’s untroubled ability simply to *add* others without losing a bit of the self... [I]t assumes the possibility of change without
loss, without alteration, without remapping the navigational principles that allow us to make judgments about quality, appropriateness, inclusion and revision.

(2002: 66)

While she perhaps gives too little credit to the unsettlement that some of these projects can, nevertheless, create within museums and the extent that it can prompt questioning of what is included in the museum and on what criteria, her argument that ‘social inclusion’ often just leads to ‘compensatory visibility’ – making minorities visible in public space – rather than more ramifying change is an important challenge to such initiatives.\(^{22}\)

The shift to a more transcultural approach was a significant attempt to move beyond mere ‘inclusion’ and to avoid the zoological representation of cultures. In devising this approach, Poovaya Smith drew on her reading of post-colonial critical discourse theorists such as Edward Said, Homi Bhabha and Gayatri Spivak (1998: 112).\(^{23}\) At the same time, she sought to consult with South Asians in Bradford and to mount a series of temporary exhibitions on topics that she hoped would engage local, especially though not exclusively South Asian, interest. These included exhibitions on gold and silver, Islamic calligraphy and textiles (especially saris – garments worn by women in many areas of the Indo-Pakistan sub-continent and also in Bradford). Interestingly, these subjects, developed in consultation with people of South Asian descent in Bradford, used a variety of media and broached the usual distinction between fine art and craft.\(^{24}\) Importantly for Poovaya-Smith’s project, the temporary exhibitions succeeded in bringing considerably increased numbers of South Asian visitors to Cartwright Hall (Poovaya Smith 1991: 126).

**Transcultural connections**

It is worth looking more closely here at the strategies that Poovaya Smith used to try to express the transcultural. First, there are the areas of collection. These included the themes of some of the temporary exhibitions and were subject-matters which cut across territorial boundaries. Thus, gold and silver, for example, are not only the chosen media for many skilful artists across much of South Asia (rather than just certain countries) but also have symbolic and social significance across a wide area. Moreover, some of these skills and significances reach across to West Yorkshire and other sites beyond South Asia. Islamic calligraphy also provided an opportunity to explore a subject that, while of especial interest to Muslims in Bradford, also stretched across a wide geographical territory, drawing its examples not only from South Asia but also from the Middle-East. The collecting strategy was, however, even more encompassing than this, for Poovaya Smith also included works by some British artists not of South Asian origin but who have been influenced by South Asian styles. So, for example, jewellery by Clarissa Mitchell and Roger Barnes
Transcultural heritage was included in the original exhibition on gold. This was, however, objected to by some members of the ‘South Asian community’ in Bradford on the grounds that these artists ‘were exploiting the subcontinent for their own ends’ (Poovaya Smith 1991: 126). Poovaya Smith’s view, however, was that the work of these artists ‘did not so much imitate Indian jewellery so much as let the influence of India itself impress itself upon their work, often in highly original ways’ (1991: 126); and she chose, therefore, to ignore this criticism: ‘The voices of the community are important voices but they do not necessarily always embody a God-like infallibility or collective wisdom’ (ibid.). In doing so, she privileged her ‘transcultural’ vision over that which, from this perspective, ‘indicated a certain narrowness of vision and prejudice’ (ibid.). This was not the only area of potential dissent. In the exhibition on gold, Poovaya Smith hoped to include commentary on the ‘pernicious’ elements of dowry which sometimes result in ‘dowry deaths’ where a bride’s family is unable to pay the sums, generally in the form of gold jewellery, demanded by a groom’s family. She consulted a group of people from ‘the community’ who were all very much in favour of this idea, though they did not want this to be the only dimension of the subject discussed. However, these selected ‘community representatives’ were all under 35 years old and had grown up in Britain. An exhibition in Leicester on a similar theme received a very different response when older members of ‘the South Asian community’ were consulted. There ‘the community’ argued that anything which might caste a negative light on South Asian cultural practices should not be displayed in a museum (see Poovaya Smith 1991: 122–5). Evident here is that the trope of community can mask differences of perspective, including about how culture should be represented. Also clear are differing expectations about the role of the museum – as a representation of uncontested culture or as a possible prompt for debate.

In attempting to cut across geographical and traditional ‘community’ identities, the exhibitions in the Transcultural Galleries do nevertheless employ the idea of locality in relation to Bradford or West Yorkshire itself. Again, however, this is done not so much to ‘museumise’ a clear-cut identity as to highlight the plural nature of the locality and to explore the theme from multiple perspectives. (The slippage between referring to the locality as ‘Bradford’ and as ‘West Yorkshire’ is itself indicative of the fact that locality is not precisely demarcated.) Thus, while the exhibition contains a substantial proportion of work either from the Indo-Pakistan subcontinent or by artists who self-identify as at least partly from this region, many, though by no means all of these are also from Bradford. Moreover, the galleries also contain works by artists from West Yorkshire, such as David Hockney, who have no South Asian connections; and there are various other items, such a Japanese suit of armour, whose only ‘Bradfordness’ lies in the fact that it was originally purchased by a Bradford philanthropist. The theme of locality is also explored through various commissioned works where artists were asked to reflect on either the city of Bradford or Cartwright Hall and its collections themselves.
Such works include Lubna Chowdhary’s miniature mysticised sculptures of Bradford buildings; Fahmida Shah’s cryptic and surprising depiction of a motorbike (which was part of a temporary exhibition at Cartwright Hall) as an artistic reflection on Cartwright Hall; and Mah Rana’s contemporary jewellery, with titles such as ‘I never promised you a rose garden’, which provide elegant ironic commentaries on South Indian marriage pendants.

The ways in which both ‘South Asia’ and ‘locality’ are evoked, then, are multi-perspectival and plural. In the galleries there is no attempt to arrange artefacts in terms of separate cultures; and nor is there a historical narrative. This is not to say that it is all totally disorganised, however. Certainly, there is not the same strong sense of order – and the potential to survey a long gallery vista as you walk in – that you find in many traditional galleries, and elsewhere in Cartwright Hall. There is less sense here of an objectively positioned viewer. Instead, perspective depends on a specific and potentially different standpoint.

There is organisation, however. Rather than this working by a logic of distinction and taxonomic categories, the logic is one of connection. This is a word that Nima Poovaya Smith repeats many times as she explains the displays; and following a major redisplay of the galleries in 2008 they are now called Connect – and organised into three themes of Place, People Icons and Imagination. To some extent, connection has always been one of the logics employed in exhibitions, and Kevin Hetherington has written interestingly of what he calls ‘the will to connect’ in relation to museums and their analysis (1997). In the Transcultural Galleries and Connect, however, connection is not conceptualised as somehow ‘bringing out’ some underlying reality (a perspective which the historian John Pickstone (1994) refers to as ‘diagnostic’ or – taking his use from nineteenth-century museums – ‘museological’) but of connection as serendipitous, suggestive, and sometimes witty and ironic. Perhaps this is an instance of an increasingly common form, related to and maybe even partly modelled on the world-wide web, as Richard Terdiman suggests is the case for memory more generally (2003). The connections made are not supposed as in any way inevitable but it is hoped that they will spark reflection and a sense of the vigour of these kind of ‘contacts’ (Clifford 1997). ‘Connection’ is conceptualised as movement, process and creative agency. Moreover, the nature of the ‘connections’ varies in the galleries. For example, one set of exhibits are all on the theme of water: David Hockney’s painting ‘Le Plongeur (paper pool)’ (1978); another painting, reflecting on the Hockney, Howard Hodgkin’s ‘David’s Pool’ (1985), and ‘Water Weaver’ (2000), by Indian artist, Arpana Caur. And in the People Icons gallery of Connect, curator Nilesh Misty, also includes reflexive thematic connections – such as a set of images focusing very variously on religion: Hughie O’Donoghue’s ‘Three studies for crucifixion’ (1996), Bradford artist William Rothenstein’s (1872–1945) ‘Carrying the Law’ (1907) with a depiction of Rabbis carrying the Torah, juxtaposed with Indian Kalighat paintings of Hindu Gods from the early 1900s. The iconic Indian Film star Rekha is seen in the Bollywood Film Poster, ‘Umrao Jaan’, which sits

Historical connections include Yinka Shonibare’s ‘The Wanderer’ (2006) – a model of an evocative slave ship, with sails in West African batik fabrics – positioned close to a portrait by John Collier (1850–1934) of industrialist, textile inventor and entrepreneur Samuel Cunliffe Lister (1815–1906) whose wealth from the production of woollen Worsted fabrics and silk velvets, and export across the territories of the British Empire and beyond, enabled the construction of Cartwright Hall Art Gallery on the site of his former residence Lister Park.

In order to try to escape from geographical definitions and ‘the trope of community’, and the ‘taken-for-granted isomorphism of culture, place and people’ (Çağlar 1997: 174) that these tend to conjure up, Ayşe Çağlar suggests focusing on ‘person-object relations as these exist in space and time’ (1997: 180). Thus, rather than beginning with ‘a community’ or a geographical area, her methodological suggestion is to begin with objects and then, ‘[b]y plotting the networks of interconnected practices surrounding objects, and the sentiments, desires and images these practices evoke, we can avoid the need to
define collectivities in advance’ (ibid.). The Transcultural Galleries and Connect at Cartwright Hall exemplify this, with objects, rather than any particular geographical or ethnic categories, as the beginning point and main content of the exhibition. Moreover, by having rather little text in the exhibition (for the most part there are only short labels giving the artist’s name, the title of the work and its date), it is able to circumvent for the most part geographical or ethnic descriptions. In this respect, the exhibition medium has a clear advantage over, say, a written account in that it can privilege objects and do away with linguistic categorisation almost entirely. In doing so, however, it risks forgoing the second stage of Çağlar’s methodological process: the plotting of the social and cultural networks in which the objects are more usually enmeshed, and, as such, an endorsement of ‘globalism as a kind of super-sociality’ that may also ‘conceal’ that which does not connect or problematic connections, as Marilyn Strathern cautions (2002: xv). While leaving objects ‘to speak for themselves’ may be an appropriate strategy for art works which can be seen (controversially) as a more calculated attempt to speak directly to the viewer, it means that the biographical contexts of much that is displayed – the lives, worlds and histories of which they were part, the contexts which give meaning to the objects – are given much less shrift than their formal, ‘artistic’ qualities. At least one commentator on the Transcultural Galleries found the labelling ‘predictable’ and remarked that the approach was ‘not innovative’ at this level (Lovelace 1997: 22). As this commentator also noted, however, this problem was one that was being well countered by the employment of a linked CD-ROM in the exhibition which includes quotes (e.g. by the artists involved), video footage of various artefacts being demonstrated in use, and – perhaps most innovatively – videos of visitor discussion groups making various thematic links between works on display (ibid.); and Connect extends this further, also into thoughtful labels, sometimes encouraging visitors to see global and historical links that are not necessarily legible to most on the surfaces of the objects themselves.

What this example from Bradford surely shows is that it is possible for museums to create connections across the differences that heritage more usually speaks. These are not necessarily comfortable links – as those of slavery show. How far this possibility to create such connections really disrupts either the expectation that heritage does still belong to particular communities – or peoples – or the identities with which such heritage is usually associated, however, remains unclear. Cartwright Hall provides evidence both ways: on the one hand in a request from Sikhs for more of their heritage to be put on display, and, on the other, in the work of younger artists who purposefully play with different traditions – and identities.26 But, in the very process of doing so, it opens up new conversations.

It is worth noting here that while heritage forms such as the public museum were tightly bound up with the development of the nation-state in late eighteenth- and nineteenth-century Europe, their potential always, surely, exceeded this. Most museums formed in this period collected a wide array of
Transcultural heritage

objects – not only the direct heritage of their own location but also from further afield. This was often from the colonies – but not only. This excess, however, is also what allows heritage institutions such as museums to be used in new ways today – as when collections formed as part of the colonial endeavour are used to try to tell transnational stories that it is hoped will lead to greater understanding of the colonial relations themselves and even, perhaps, ‘convivial culture’ (Gilroy 2004).

Exhibiting migration

Since the opening of the Transcultural Galleries there have been numerous further exhibitions that attempt in various ways to recognise cultural diversity within Europe today and also to rethink how the nation is performed (Ostow 2008). That many of these are framed in terms of ambitions to ‘increase social inclusion’, ‘bring communities together’ or ‘foster intercultural communication’, speaks both to the fact that museums and exhibitions are widely conceptualised as social agencies, capable of initiating or channelling social change, as well as to a predominant working model of separate communities and cultures. While the latter is often part of the social reality within which cultural institutions operate – that is, they may be confronted by self-identifying ‘communities’ requesting that their ‘own culture’ is represented in the museum – their challenge is to make
sure that they do not overlook more hybrid, transcultural forms or identities, and also that they do not contribute to further reifying pristine ‘cultures’ and so generating further ‘exclusions’.

Migration itself has become a frequent topic of exhibitions and of an expanding number of new museums in Europe. The most high profile, and so far only national museum of migration in Europe, is the Cité Nationale de l’Histoire de l’Immigration (the National Museum of the History of Immigration), which opened in Paris in 2007, partly in response to growing unrest in areas of high migrant populations in Paris. Both Switzerland and the UK are currently considering the case for national museums on this topic. More often, however, the topic is included in smaller museum developments and individual exhibitions, usually run by local museums and migrant organisations. In Germany, for example, the organisation DOMiD (Dokumentationszentrum und Museum über die Migration in Deutschland/Documentation centre and museum of Migration in Germany) – originally established by Turkish migrants but since expanded to include many other migrants – has been especially instrumental in organising or co-organising exhibitions, such as Projekt Migration, which ran in various locations in 2005. City Museums and ethnographic museums have frequently mounted exhibitions, or devoted sections of the museum, to immigration and communities with migrant backgrounds. In addition, there is also a growth in numbers of museums of emigration, for example, in Denmark, Ireland and Portugal. The cultural dynamic of these differs from the focus on immigration – and the increasing multi- and fusion- culture of Europe – but they act as a reminder nonetheless of global movement.

A major question concerning these museums and exhibitions is how far they succeed in allowing for more fluid and possibly transcultural identity formations. Kirsten Poehls argues that exhibitions on migration ‘challenge the relevance of the nation’ (2011: 350–1), unsettling partly simply by the fact that they focus on movement rather than boundaries. She observes that maps are frequently used in such exhibitions. While maps have been part of the visual apparatus for assembling the nation-state, she suggests that maps in migration exhibitions may work differently, to ‘undercut the meaning of European geopolitical boundaries’ (2011: 345, original emphasis) and even disrupt the taken-for-granted objectivity of the map, with their arrows showing movement across borders and perhaps more subjective, personalised mappings of routes taken by particular migrants. Another prevalent visual trope in migration exhibitions is the suitcase (Macdonald 2008: 56; Poehls 2011: 346). As Poehls notes, this is an apt metaphor for the ‘cultural baggage’ that migrants take with them (ibid.). The suitcase evokes culture as package-able, containable and transportable across borders; but perhaps also hints at a transitory status, as requiring unpacking. And in exhibitions such as the thoughtful Destination X in the Museum of World Cultures in Gothenburg, which addresses migration and forced movement alongside tourism and business travel, the multiplicity of suitcases exhibited
reminds further that it is not just migrants who carry ‘cultural baggage’ across borders (Poehls 2011: 347).

While exhibitions and museums addressing migration and cultural diversity are certainly capable of expanding the range of ‘voices’ included in the public sphere, and, in this way, of potentially unsettling existing identity formations, they do not necessarily do so, or not as extensively as they might. One strategy that has been much deployed is the object-biography. In many ways this follows Çağlar’s injunctions above to begin not with a community or population, but to make the object or collection the focus for highlighting different players and their connections. Sometimes this can be rather innocuous and even turn into heroic stories of collectors, but done well it can highlight unexpected connections and histories, and give real detail to colonial encounters or the politics by which objects may travel to museums. As such, it can be capable of injecting certain memories into a public sphere from which they were previously absent and at the same time of revealing processes of public memory-making and earlier forgetting. A related approach begins with individuals and their stories. As well as allowing for a traversing of cultures and categories, this can also have the effect of humanising an exhibition, allowing for identifications at more intimate, personal, levels. We are presented with the city, or nation, not through some overall account but through individual portraits – especially

FIGURE 7.4 Exhibition of ‘world’ of suitcases in Destination X, Museum of World Cultures, Gothenburg, Sweden. Photograph by Sharon Macdonald, reproduced courtesy of the Museum of World Cultures
of migrants of various kinds. It is a recovery of individual variety; it avoids reducing the place to a single persona, to the long-time resident perhaps; and it signals the multiplicity of cultural heritage and memory. Too often, however, it is reduced to a rather insubstantial formula of the smiling face accompanied by a text which shows multiple cultural affiliations – a liking for chapatis and hip hop and Manchester United, thus reducing those displayed to a new motif: that of the ‘happily hybrid citizen’ (Macdonald 2008: 56). The real content of their difference, and perhaps the dilemmas that they face because of it, is subsumed under the sea of smiling faces and the uncannily similar form that the depictions take. In her analysis of the Cité Nationale de l’Histoire de l’Immigration and Ellis Island Migration Museum in the US, Julie Thomas also points out how individual migration stories are presented as ‘memory of the process of becoming, rather than any specific culturally defined memory’. She argues that this succeeds in normalizing and rationalizing the process of migration. The economic threat of migrant communities is defused by the narrative of plus ça change, and the cultural threat of transnational identities is removed as they are seen as subject contributors to the national heritage. (Thomas 2011: 220)

Another brake on the potential unsettlement of migration stories is the tendency for these to crystallise rather than dissolve a division between migrants and non-migrants. That is, migration, migrants and descendants of migrants are staged against a backdrop of an assumed stable, usually national, population. This may be accentuated by the geo-politics of location: migration being, perhaps, included only in temporary exhibitions or a museum’s more marginal spaces. The Cité Nationale de l’Histoire de l’Immigration is located far from the centre of Paris, in an area rarely visited by tourists and, moreover, is in a former building of colonial administration that has subsequently served as a museum of the colonies and then of African and Oceanic art. Rather than making migrants central to French society, therefore, they remain – in museological topography – in its margins, part of a colonial inheritance requiring administration and perhaps too without yet quite having rid themselves of the taint of the colonial curio. According to Andrea Meza Torres’ ethnographic observations (2011), based on fieldwork in the Cité Nationale de l’Histoire de l’Immigration, this plays out in other aspects of the museum’s practice too. The well-intentioned deployment of ethnically diverse – and ethnically clad – front-of-house staff, for example, ends up, she argues, making the museum appear to be engaged in a continuation of colonial relations and empire. In some ways the problem is exacerbated by the relative inattention to colonialism itself in the museum. As Mary Stevens (2009) shows from her fascinating detailed analysis of the making of the museum, this was not always the case but a series of decisions about ‘containment’ of the topic of immigration and disciplinary specialisms contributed to its marginalisation in the finished exhibitions.
This chapter has considered the challenge posed to the existing memory-identity complex by migration, and the transculturalism that this potentially – though far from inevitably – unleashes. It has done so especially in relation to heritage, in some of its most widespread cultural forms: monuments and museums. Precisely because these have been so implicated in identity work – especially in the assemblage of stable, national identities – they constitute key sites in which to examine some of the claims of identity transformation. What we have seen in this chapter are transformations in museums and monuments, as part of a struggle to address and perhaps even shape the changing identity-constellations of Europe today. In particular, what we have seen is heritage being drawn upon in less declarative and more provocative modes. That is, we see heritage being actively deployed not in service of ontological and legitimacy claims but as part of a more tentative setting out of alternatives or even an explicit provocation to debate. This is not only a change of the operation of heritage but also a reconfiguring of the public sphere and of the role of material cultural forms – monuments/public sculpture and exhibitions and museums – within it. Rather than constituting authoritative ‘definitive statements’, exhibitions and public sculpture increasingly operate in more conversational modes to help encourage the making of a more fluid, plural and contested public sphere. This is not to say that this is the only direction, however. Existing forms persist and even proliferate alongside new, more plural, interventions; and those interventions, and even the transcultural itself, can be, and are, contested, as we have seen in examples in this chapter. In addition, and as we have also seen here, both the migrant and the transcultural can be pushed to the margins of what then becomes even more fully ‘mainstream’; or they may even be appropriated – partially and perhaps with significant ‘blanks’ – within it. It is also salutary to note that it is probably still the case that for the most part new museums and monuments are being produced in the service of making and defending discrete ‘cultures’ rather than to help encourage the transcultural or conversational.

As cultural forms, this chapter makes evident that monuments – if understood broadly as memorial sculptural forms – and museums are capable of articulating more fluid and transcultural identity formations than they have previously done, though they may sometimes struggle with aspects of their existing form and the perhaps conservative expectations of publics. In the case of museum attempts to work beyond nation-statist models, it is worth noting that this can involve drawing on museums’ existing collections. Museum objects already often hold the potential for telling new memory stories, and especially for making connections between continents and between times, thus allowing for objects to be re-presented into new, perhaps more connective, displays.

As we have seen, the transcultural is usually conceptualised as a set of connections across or between cultures. This is the limit – and at least partial reality – against which it may also struggle. Just as a network is typically
conceptualised as a mesh of threads between nodes or junctions, each ‘trans’-
(cultural)-action easily ends up being thought of as a movement between two points.\textsuperscript{33} But this may not be enough to transcend either the existing model of culture or the national with which it is so often entangled. Perhaps cosmopolitan heritage and memory forms offer more potential to do so? Or perhaps it is possible not to dispense altogether with the national or the models of culture with which it is associated but nevertheless to simultaneously allow for, and encourage, more open understandings? The next chapter explores this further.
NOTES

1 The European memory complex: introduction

1 Nora 1989: 14. Note: in this book the date that follows the first one is that of the original publication in whatever language a piece was first published in. In this case, the article by Nora was first published in English.


3 See Hewison 1987 for the first of these and Lowenthal 1998 for the second two.

4 Huyssen 1995, for example, refers especially to the 1980s and Lowenthal is specific in his claim that ‘Modern preoccupation with heritage dates from about 1980, alike in Reagan’s America, Thatcher’s Britain, and Pompidou’s France’ (1998: 4). Both, however, also note some earlier developments and other authors, such as Samuel (1994), document an expansion of popular history developments in the 1960s with various earlier precursors. Historians’ academic concern with memory is dated similarly. Blight, for example, writes that ‘Before 1980, it was rare to see any citations with the word “memory” in the title’ (2009: 241) but notes too that the general issue ‘seems to have first crept into our discourse in the 1960s and 1970s’ (ibid.).

5 Referred to in the online Encyclopaedia Britannica: http://www.britannica.com/EBchecked/topic/129940/complex.

6 Key theorists who are identified with what has come to be called assemblage theory are Gilles Deleuze e.g. Deleuze and Guattari 1987/1976, especially as expounded and expanded by Manuel DeLanda (especially 2006); and Bruno Latour, especially 2005. Bennett 2007, and Bennett and Healy 2009 and 2009a provide useful commentary and further extension. The French term used by Deleuze and Guattari is *agencement*, which, as Margaret Wetherell points out, is more active than ‘assemblage’ might imply, especially as it is used in archaeology (2012: 15). For discussion of the notion of assemblage in relation to heritage, see Macdonald 2009 (which also informs my
discussed here); and Harrison et al. 2013. Bennett’s use of the term ‘complex’ in his important essay on the exhibitionary complex (in Bennett 1995) is especially influenced by Foucault and while it predates his explicit interest in ‘assemblage’ shares some of the same theoretical elements.

7 The subtitle of DeLanda’s A New Philosophy of Society, for example, is Assemblage Theory and Social Complexity. For further discussion see also Byrne 1998; Hayles 1990; Law and Mol 2002; and Urry 2003.

8 See especially DeLanda’s discussion of the ‘linguisticality of experience’ (2006: 45ff) and DeLanda 2011 (appendix). For an excellent critique of the tendency in some assemblage theory and non-representational theory to ‘rubbish discourse’ see Wetherell 2012.

9 Ethnologie has come into use in Germany post World War II, generally as a replacement for Volkskunde (Folklore); and the term Empirische Kulturwissenschaft (Empirical Cultural Studies) is also used – see also Chapter 2. The change in terminology was motivated largely by some regarding Volkskunde as tainted by Nazi associations, though concern to broaden the subject also played a part. For discussion see Dow and Lixfeld 1994; and Bendix 2012. Rogan’s (2012) overview of the place of Folklore in European countries contains much of relevance on disciplinary formations of anthropology and ethnology in the various countries. See also Johler 2000 and 2001; Vermeulen and Roldán 1995; Hann et al. 2005; Boskovic 2008; Dietzsch et al. 2009; Kürti and Skálník 2009, and Kockel et al. 2012.

10 In Britain, Folklore is not established in the academy (and has no entry in a recent Blackwell Companion on the subject: Bendix and Hasan-Rokem 2012). In other European countries (and also in the US) it is usually stronger, though often generally fairly small in relation to other disciplines. See Rogan 2012 for an excellent overview. The place of Folklore is also related to questions about folk museums, discussed in Chapter 6.

11 For discussion of his use of this term see Dresch 1998; Gofman 1998; and Hart 2007. On the notion of ethnography as entailing particular commitments, see Miller’s excellent ethnography of capitalism (1997).

12 In the UK the tradition, modelled on the agricultural year, is of at least a year’s fieldwork, though shorter time periods and more episodic forms of fieldwork are increasingly common and used especially subsequent to the initiation rite of doctoral fieldwork. In most other European traditions the time period is shorter – with fieldwork of weeks or months being common – and episodic research, especially in the locality of the researcher’s university, being widespread.

13 For discussion of this see Greverus et al. 2002, including Gisela Welz’s thoughtful argument for why the village might nevertheless be a productive focus of study (2002), a discussion also contained in Welz et al. 2011.

14 This point is one that is also made in assemblage perspectives, which attempt to eschew notions of scale in which the micro is seen as nestling inside the macro (Macdonald 2009). Instead, the emphasis, as here, is on examining how categories such as ‘the global’ are formed in concrete contexts and through specific materialisations and the like. In using the term ‘worlds’ here I do not intend to imply that these are discrete – the UNESCO meeting and the remote village are both intensely networked in their realisation of the global.

15 Numerous writers have commented upon this, including Klein 2000; Kansteiner 2002; Radstone 2000. For a discussion in relation to its uses in anthropology, see Berliner 2005.


17 See Winter 2012; Bowker 2008; Locke 2000; and also, in relation to brain-scanning research, Dumit 2003.

18 See Kansteiner 2002: 185–7; see also Wertsch 2009: 118. Klein’s lively discussion of the ‘turn to memory’ among historians also includes insightful commentary on the traffic between notions of individual memory – which he regards as often
'quasi-religious' – and social (2000). The concept of trauma has seen especially extensive use and discussion in recent years. For a robust critique see Kansteiner and Weinböck 2008.

19 Locke 1836: 234. The essay was first published in 1690. For further discussion in relation to memory see Hacking 1995: 146–7 and in relation to material culture, Hides 1997.

20 Anderson 1983 is a key discussion. See also Handler 1988 for sensitive treatment, discussing MacPherson's ideas.

21 They also extend beyond Europe. Handler (1988), for example, writes of Quebecois nationalism.

22 There has been extensive discussion of this, especially amongst historians in relation to what they often refer to as ‘the turn to memory’. For an overview see Cubitt 2007.

23 See also Kerwin Lee Klein's (2000) discussion of the rise of ‘memory’ in historical research.

24 See, for example, Klein 2000; Radstone 2000; Kansteiner 2002; Cubitt 2007. Michael Lambek's discussion, in which he draws on Mauss to question not only the history-memory distinction but also that between social and individual, is particularly insightful (2003).

25 J.L. Austin's discussion (posthumously published in Sense and Sensibilia, 1962) of notions of 'truth', 'evidence', 'real' and the like highlights the range of uses to which these may be put and difficulties of, for example, unverifiable statements or the fact that a general statement may be easier to corroborate than a more detailed report.

26 Olick and Robbins note that the term 'collective memory' was used earlier, in 1902, by Hugo von Hofmannsthal; Halbwachs first using it in his The Social Frameworks of Memory in 1925 (Olick and Robbins 1998; see also Klein 2000: 128). The term ‘social memory’ is sometimes said to have been first used by art historian Aby Warburg (1866–1929) (Assmann 2008: 110). There are numerous texts providing discussion and definitions of social memory, cultural memory and so forth. Particularly useful are Olick and Robbins 1998; Misztal 2003 and Erll and Nünning 2008.

27 For discussion see Misztal 2003: 54–5; Apfelbaum 2010.

28 For discussion see Rüsen 1990, 2001, 2005; and Seixas 2004. See also Chapter 2.

29 Although Gadamer’s term 'wirkungsgeschichtliches Bewusstsein' is sometimes translated as ‘effective historical consciousness’, translators J. Weinsheimer and D.G. Marshall prefer to translate it as ‘historically effected consciousness’ in order to indicate Gadamer’s concern with a process in which the individual is ‘affected by history… and conscious that it is so’ (translators' preface in Gadamer 1989/1960, p.xv).

30 Hirsch and Stewart propose use of the term ‘historicity’ to describe ‘a human situation in flow, where versions of the past and future… assume present form in relation to events, political needs, available cultural forms and emotional dispositions’ (2005: 262). As I understand it, this would be one dimension of what I am referring to here as ‘past presencing’.

31 See, for example, David Berliner’s criticisms of the use of ‘memory’ and charge that its use in anthropology becomes indistinguishable from ‘culture’ (2005). Given that the term ‘culture’ is multiply fraught, collapsing discussion into this does not solve the problems. As Gable and Handler argue, “‘culture’ and “memory” are parallel concepts, sometimes useful and sometimes not’ (2011: 23). What limits both is their entanglement with ‘native use’. As they put it so well in relation to ‘memory’: ‘In the study of Western societies … anthropologists will have to pay attention to the native discourse of memory. The trick is to include social scientists and historians among the natives’ (2011: 43).

32 See Munn 1992 and Gell 1992 for discussions of the anthropology of time. Munn’s essay includes delineation of an area similar to that which I here call ‘past-presencing’.

33 Koselleck’s terminology is closely linked with that of Heidegger and Gadamer, two important influences upon his thinking. See Zamitto 2004.
The literature is already vast. For some recent overviews and collections that indicate the newer directions see Peckham 2003; Anheier and Isar 2011; Anico and Peralta 2009; Hoelscher 2006; Butler 2006; Fairclough et al. 2007; Smith 2006, Heinich 2009, Harrison 2012. The International Journal of Heritage Studies is also a key venue for publishing in this field.

For discussion of the term ‘intangible heritage’ see Kirshenblatt-Gimblett 2007; and Hafstein 2009.

See also Dicks 2004 for a broad consideration of putting ‘culture’ on display and making it ‘visitable’.

For discussion see Nic Craith 2008; Hemme et al. 2007a.

See Hoyau 1988 and Heinich 2009. In both cases they may be coupled with ‘cultural’ when referring to what would be called ‘heritage’ in English. Thanks also to Aleksandra Jaramillo Vasquez for discussion. See also the interesting discussion of changing Czech terms – and heritage practices – from socialism to post-socialism in Aplenc 2004: 66.

Lévi-Strauss sets out these ideas over various publications but especially in The Savage Mind (1966/1962).

Gell 1992, Chapter 3, provides an excellent sympathetic as well as critical account, including an overview of criticisms made by others. See also Fabian 1983.

Strathern’s Gender of the Gift (1988) was her first most significant work employing this approach, set out especially in the final chapter. See also Gingrich and Fox 2002 for discussion of the role of comparison – and different models of this – in anthropology.


See, for example, a YouGov survey of 13 March 2012, which lists 62 per cent of the British population wanting either to leave the EU or to have a looser relationship with it, as opposed to 24 per cent of Germans wanting this (http://research.yougov.co.uk/news/2012/03/13/cross-country-attitudes-towards-europe/).


2 Making histories: Europe, traditions and other present pasts

Attributed to Marcel Proust by the character David Rossi (played by Joe Mantegna) in Criminal Minds, season 6, episode 3: Remembrance of Things Past, The Mark Gordon Company and CBS television, first broadcast October 2010.

See, for example, Dow and Lixfeld 1994; Jell-Bahlens 1985; Hauschild 1997; and Bendix 2012.

Boissevain’s 1992 volume Revitalizing European Rituals is a key text discussing this development and includes wide-ranging examples, such as the ‘revitalization’ of carnival (Cowan 1992; Poppi 1992), as well as practices such as pilgrimage (Crain 1992). See also Wilson and Smith 1993 for an early focus on cultural change and the new Europe.

For overviews of the development of European social anthropology see Macdonald 1993; Herzfeld 1987; Borneman and Fowler 1997; Kockel, Nic Craith and Frykman 2012.

Critiques include Linnekin 1991; Kapferer 1988; Herzfeld 1991; Sahlins 1999; and Eriksen 2004. Boissevain’s choice of the term ‘revitalisation’ (1992) is a search for an alternative that better expresses what he sees as more characteristic of developments underway.

See Dorson 1976, who coined the term. In German, the term Folklorismus similarly distinguished the properly authentic but in some uses gave consideration to different forms of ‘folklorisation’. See Newall 1987 for general discussion; and Herzfeld 1982 for discussion of the place of folklore in Greece.
is concerned with how the object comes to identify the consumer through ownership and consumption), and ‘essence’/‘presence’ (which alludes to authority, or what she calls ‘the weight of certitude’ (1969: 134). As my discussion already covers aspects of the stabilising authority of museums I use Hoskins’ characterisation rather than Morin’s.

12 See www.highlandfolk.com/.

13 Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels The Manifesto of the Communist Party, first published in German in 1845. Samuel Moore’s English translation is available at: /www.marxistsfr.org/archive/marx/works/download/manifest.pdf. The quotation is on p.5. For discussion of what was meant by this – and his ambivalence about the developments involved – see Berman 1983, especially Chapter II.

14 See www.skyemuseum.co.uk/index.html.

15 See Macdonald 1997; Greverus et al. 2002; Welz et al. 2011; Macdonald 2011.

16 The affective density of home was discussed in Chapter 4. Didier Maleuvre provides insightful discussion of the relationship between the museum and the home: 1999, especially Chapter 2.

17 Indeed, the establishment of a museums registration scheme by the Museums and Galleries Commission in the 1980s was partly intended to try to deal with the potentially conflicting notions of ‘ownership’ involved in such donations in the face of the massive expansion of independent museums. In donating objects to museums, the Commission recognised, individuals did not regard these as becoming the property of the museum owners to do with whatever they wanted but conceptualised their donations as in a sense ‘public’ and assumed that objects would be kept in the museum and preserved for ever.

18 For example, Weber 1922 and 1923. See also Macdonald 2005 for discussion of museums and enchantment.

19 In his analysis of Scandinavian folk museums Mark Sandberg writes of how these techniques could be even more effective without mannequins – the visitor themselves then filling the space of the ‘missing persons’ (2005: 181). Scandinavian folk museum makers developed what they called ‘the interior principle’: ‘the strategy of placing objects back in relation to bodies, and both back into domestic interiors by staging a scene imagined to be taking place before the viewer’s eyes’ (2005: 181–2).

20 In English, Lévi-Strauss’s term sauvage is often translated as ‘savage’ rather than ‘wild’ but the latter better captures the unruly but nevertheless sophisticated nature of these museums. Janelli provides detailed discussion of her use of this term.

21 In Macdonald 2011 I discuss museum shops and attempt a typology of kinds of things sold by their form of relationship to the museum.

22 There is now an extensive literature on consumption as ‘sacralising’ objects or mass consumption or otherwise making them meaningful. In particular, it is a repeated theme in the work of Daniel Miller (e.g. 1998, 2008).

23 For these various forms of ‘modernity see, in order of mention: Harvey 1989; Giddens 1991; Bauman 2000; and the first two for these terms of time-space relations.

7 Transcultural heritage: reconfiguring identities and the public sphere

1 From his poem, Ars Poetica? The former lines refer to the ‘purpose of poetry’ being ‘to remind us how difficult it is to remain just one person’. The poem is quoted in Lehrer 2010: 161.

2 For discussion of ‘hybridity’ see especially Wrbner 1997; Çağlar 1997; Young 1995; Brah and Coombes 2000, and Wade 2005. On ‘creolisation’ see also Hanzer 1996 and Sheller 2003; on ‘syncretism’, Stewart and Shaw 1994; and for discussion of a range of terms and theorisations, Pieterse 2009. In museums, there has also been
some use of the notion of hybridity in relation to mixing disciplines and categories of collection, such as those of natural history and art. This has probably been most actively developed in Kelvingrove Museum, Glasgow, where, interestingly, it is also linked to a thoughtful social inclusion agenda. See O’Neill 2006 and Morgan 2011.

3 In an earlier essay (Macdonald 2003) which covers some of the same territory as the present chapter, I elided the notions of ‘transcultural’ and ‘postnational’, perhaps reflecting the more widely held assumption at that time that transcultural developments would threaten the future of the nation-state. Discussion in this chapter and the next shows that this is not necessarily so.

4 Some scholars make a distinction between the monument and the memorial – regarding the former as a relatively celebratory remembrance and the latter as a wish not to forget a more traumatic event, such as war; though both share a mnemonic motivation and in practice are often used interchangeably. See Sturken 1997, pp. 46–9, for helpful discussion.

5 Jordanova 1989: 32; Coombes 1994; Bennett 1998, 2004; Sherman 2008. These also variously discuss the point that follows in the text below. See also Bennett 2004: 95–6 for an insightful Deleuze-influenced discussion of the notion of mastery in relation to colonial relations.


8 Samuel 1994 and 1998 provides an illuminating account. See also the discussion in the previous chapter.


10 See references in the previous footnote and also Friedman 1997 and Hage 2000.

11 Wêlz 1996 is an important early example. Others studies include Werbner 2005, Karaca 2009, and Kosnick 2009. Werbner 2012 provides a range of examples, mainly from Britain, in her excellent analysis of ‘multiculturalism’; and see also Vertovec 2010 for a range of anthropological examples.

12 See Gingrich and Banks 2006, and Vertovec and Wessendorf 2009, for anthropological examples of neo-nationalism and ‘backlash’ against multiculturalism; and also Holmes 2000. For reporting of Cameron and Merkel, see, for example, Wheeler 2011.

13 He references his argument to Hardt and Negri 2000: 161–204; and also Holmes 2000. In an analysis of the experiences of Dutch women converts to Islam, discussed below, Karin van Nieuwkerk argues even more strongly that Islam constitutes the ‘Other’ through which Dutch culture is constituted as ‘a universal non-identity’ (2004: 244). For an anthropological discussion of the reception of Islam in Europe – and possibility for a ‘European Islam’ – see Schwab 2009.

14 Information available at: http://www.kunsthallewien.at/cgi-bin/event/event. pl?id=2509;lang=en.

15 The argument that memorials serve not so much in service of remembrance as forgetting was famously made by Alois Rieg! 1903. See also Forty 1999.

16 Göle references this theorising of public space – and the public sphere – to Arendt 1958; see also Fischer 2009. Beverly M. Weber, also discussing veiling, also discusses the challenge of difference to Habermas’ original formulation of the public sphere, drawing on Mouffe for a theorisation that sees difference as fundamental to the effective operation of the public sphere (2012: 103–5).

17 The collective term hijab is often also used for all of these various forms and for the practice of veiling, though some only use it for veiling that is heavier than the dupatta. There is a wide variety of terms for different kinds of headscarves and veils in use by different populations, drawn from various languages.


In the years following the opening of the Galleries, which coincided with the election of a ‘New Labour’ government, a good deal of social and cultural policy has been couched as ‘social inclusion’, with funding often available for such projects (Sandell 1998, 2002; Waterton 2010). There have also been similar movements in other parts of Europe, such as France (ibid.). It has been the spur to a good deal of innovative work in UK museums dedicated to trying to give public space to those who had previously not seen representation of ‘their culture’ in national or civic museums; and to developments such as the new migration museum in Paris, the Cité Nationale de l’Histoire de l’Immigration.

This unsettlement may also be generated by the collaborative work that is sometimes involved in producing such exhibitions. For examples, see, Phillips 2003; Sandell 2002, 2007.

My account here also draws on an interview with Nima Poovaya Smith, and interviews with Nilesh Misty and Janet Simmonds, Cartwright Hall, for which I am very grateful.

The distinction between art and craft has often been mapped on to distinctions between ‘European’ and ‘non-European’, and ‘male-produced’ and ‘female-produced’. Moreover, ‘crafts’ have been more likely to be displayed in museums of folklife and ethnography, where individual authorship is effaced, and ‘art’ in art galleries where the individual creativity is fetishised.

This is a ‘following’ approach partly influenced by work on object biographies: see Appadurai 1986 and Kopytoff 1986. It is also advocated for multisited fieldwork, as discussed in Chapter 3; and see Marcus 1998; and is shared by actor-network theory: see Latour 1987 for a classic account and Law and Hassard 1999 for commentary.

Nilesh Mistry and Janet Simmonds, personal communication. The work of dialogue effected by this exhibition is also through a lively programme of accompanying initiatives, such as the Young Ambassadors arts and heritage initiative, in which young people from various backgrounds in Bradford work together, including to create exhibitions such as Precious Cargo, 2012: http://www.bradfordmuseums.org/education/cargo.php. This is not a lone example. One of the major developments in museums over the last 20 years has been an expansion of work with different populations – see references in Note 21 above. Some, such as Manchester Museum’s award-winning Collective Conversations (http://www.museum.manchester.ac.uk/community/collectiveconversations/), inspired by James Clifford’s theorising of museums as ‘contact zones’ (1997).

For discussion of work with ‘communities’ see Karp and Lavine 1991; and for more recent work, framed in terms of ‘source communities’ see Peers and Brown 2003.

A report proposing such a museum was produced in 2001 and then given public support by Jacques Chirac in his presidential election campaign in 2002. Planning began in 2003. The project cost over 20 million Euros. See Toubon 2007, which is included in a special issue of Museum International (Vol. 59, nos 1–2, 2007) on the topic of migration museums with a particular focus on the Cité nationale de l’histoire de l’immigration; also discussed in Macdonald 2008. Glynn and Kleist 2012 provide a useful broader overview on migration as a focus for ‘social inclusion’ and history and memory work in a range of initiatives.

In both, plans have been drawn up, though neither has government approval yet. The following website is a useful portal of links to information about migration museums across the world: http://www.migrationmuseums.org/web/; as is UNESCO’s migration museum initiative website: http://www.unesco.org/new/en/social-and-human-sciences/themes/international-migration/projects/unesco-iom-
museum-museums-initiative/. Information that follows in this paragraph too is largely drawn from these sites and their links. As yet, the reception, or even detailed making, of these museums in Europe has not been much studied. The special issue of *Museum International* noted above provides a beginning; and the MeLa – *European Museums in an Age of Migration* – project will provide more: http://www.mela-project.eu/.


31 An in-depth comparative analysis of museums that focus on emigration and on immigration would be a useful contribution to further understanding of constructions of global movement and cultural diversity. It should also be noted that the first major museums of immigration were in new world countries: the US, Australia and Canada (see Baur 2009). Insights drawn from studies of these cannot, however, be simply transferred to the European context. In the new world cases, the immigrants have since become the dominant majorities; whereas in Europe this is not the case.

32 See Note 25 above.

33 Ingold 2007 is an interesting discussion of this, though his own notion of ‘meshwork’ and emphasis on lines does not solve the problem. See also Strathern 2004/1991 and 1996.

8 Cosmopolitan memory: Holocaust commemoration and national identity


2 The equation of Europeanisation and cosmopolitanisation is more frequent in the writing of Ulrich Beck, e.g. Beck 2006/2004; Beck and Grande 2007: see also Rumford 2005. More specifically, the idea that Europe’s twentieth-century history of atrocity and trauma, including the Holocaust, could act as a shared memory supporting a contemporary European identity has been suggested by Beck (2006/2004) and various commentators, particularly by a number of German intellectuals (e.g. Giesen 2004; see Heinbach 2009 for debates by intellectuals played out in German newspapers; and see also Delany and Rumford 2005: 95–102 for relevant discussion; and Poole 2010 for a critique of the arguments). It informs developments such as the establishing of a European network of Holocaust memorial activities. As Schlesinger and Foret (2006: 69) point out, this is a problematic proposition, not least because of the differential positioning not just of individuals, but also of nations and groups, in relation to perpetration and victimhood. Sharing a memory of atrocity is very different depending upon such positioning.

3 For references to these see, in turn: Goldberg 1995, quoted in Flanzbaum 1999: 12; Finkelstein 2000; Cole 2000 and Gruber 2002: 8. See also Piper 2001.

4 Beck et al. 2009; see also Olick 2007.

5 Glick-Schiller 2010; Glick Schiller et al. 2011: 400, 403; Vertovec and Cohen 2002. For an insightful discussion of cosmopolitanism in relation to heritage see Daugbjerg and Fibiger 2011.


7 The language of ‘victims of fascism’ was used in both Germanys. In the GDR, the framing in terms of fascism and the emphasis on political victims was especially strong and led to even greater reluctance to acknowledge the Jewish Holocaust (Herf 1997; Niven 2010). Indeed, since German reunification many concentration camps in the former GDR have been restored in order to give fuller acknowledgment of Jewish victimhood (Niven 2002; Niven and Paver 2010; Niven 2010).

8 My computer’s Word-automated spell-check, for example, recognises the term ‘holocaust’ but not ‘shoah’.

9 See Greenspan 1999 and Novick 2000 for discussion.