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Date deposited: 29 July 2014

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Heritage Reinvents Europe

Proceedings of the Internationale Conference
Ename, Belgium, 17–19 March 2011

Edited by Dirk Callebaut, Jan Mařík and Jana Maříková-Kubková
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Published by:
Europae Archaeologiae Consilium (EAC), Association Internationale sans But Lucratif (AISBL),
Siege social / official address:
Rue des Brigades d'Irlande 1
5100 Jambes (Namur)
Belgique/Belgium
Ename

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Brought to publication by Archaeolingua, Hungary
Managing editor: Elizabeth Jerem
Copy editing by Jan Mařík and Jana Maříková-Kubková
Layout by Rita Kovács
Cover design by Gergely Hős
Printed by Aduprint Printing and Publishing Ltd, Hungary
Distribution by Archaeolingua, Hungary

Cover image:
The Provincial Heritage Centre in the archaeological park of Ename (Belgium), where the local past and the future Europe meet.
Photo: Tom Nevejan, Digital Cordon Bleu bvba
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While academic archaeology can avoid nationalism, nationalism cannot do without archaeology in its myth creation and search for identity (Díaz-Andreu & Champion 1996, 18).

No satisfactory answer is given at a European level to the question of how to combine social and political unity, on the one hand, with de facto ethno-cultural and identificational diversity, on the other (Martiniello 2001, 68).

Abstract: The Council of Europe sees its work as part of “a specific contribution to the development of democratic, peaceful and open societies” (Council of Europe 2005b, 5–6). Its first objective in this task is “to raise diversity of territories as a source of strength and value” (Ibid). Its aim is to reinforce a European heritage that values diversity. Yet building identity through any view of the past is highly contentious. This paper recognises the ongoing importance of the search for origins in Europe. It frames this search in the history of the relationship between archaeology and ethnicity and the legacy of nationalism in the archaeological discipline. The Faro Framework Convention and the European Landscape Convention are part of the Council of Europe’s response to a wider ‘moral-ethical’ challenge faced by European governments.

Introduction

Over the past decade, important evolutions in thinking, which began as early as the 1980s when the objectivity of science was beginning to be questioned, were crystallised in a series of European statements and strategies. These could be seen as operating guidelines on how to be more conscientious in our roles as excavators, interpreters and cultural heritage practitioners. Where the previous generation of European protocols (such as The Council of Europe’s Granada or Valletta Conventions on Architectural and Archaeological Heritage respectively, or even the World Heritage Convention as first conceived) was concerned with the fabric of heritage, the two most recent Council of Europe cultural conventions: Florence, on landscape (in which European-ness is made manifest and material) and Faro, on the value of cultural heritage for society, supported at scientific level by the very recent ESF/COST Science Policy Briefing called ‘Landscape in a Changing World’, consider heritage from the viewpoint of the (living) people who construct and make, use and celebrate (or oppose) heritage. It is the values that they hold to be important that is heritage, rather than the fabric itself, and their human right to have such a value recognised that are key. Human rights as a concept has gradually come to the centre stage of heritage conventions, replacing a focus on property, individual rights and the ownership of objects (Turner 2006) and with it, materialist preconceptions of authenticity. This perspective is underpinned by the concept of external, extrinsic, attributed significance.

These alternative ways of seeing or conceptualising heritage are not, however, unproblematic. The framing of cultural rights based on the Conventions are “a bureaucratic celebration of precisely those aspects of culture theory that many anthropologists now mistrust”. Rowlands has said that “the identification of cultural rights with the possession of cultural property” is “a new kind of materialization of identity” (Rowlands 2002, 121) and that this kind of practice signifies that “the amount you have of your own cultural objects…is a measure in some sense of relative cultural complexity” (Rowlands 2002, 121). Furthermore, the idea of multiple values can be abused; an emphasis on multiple truths can deny problematic power relations. We must avoid being plagued by the suspicion that in this plurality of voices, claiming to give equal weight to all interpretations, some will be viewed as more authentic than others (Rowlands 1994). Democratisation can be used to thinly disguise ‘Big Society’ rhetoric, camouflaging a reduction of public things in favour of private; they offer the lure of the local, but the local is not always ‘superior’ to the global. Furthermore, broad demographic change is replacing the relatively uniform national consensuses with which are most familiar with a European-wide plurality. The new heritage paradigms do not ‘solve’ the heritage problem but reformulate it, asking different questions, not least ‘so what’ and what (and who) for?
Part 1 Concepts

1. The archaeology of ethnicity

The extent to which archaeology has contributed to a recent or ‘modern’ rise of the nation state following the Renaissance has been the focus of much analysis. It is certain that archaeology played a part in verifying the origins of nations and identity and legitimising land claims in the 19th century (Layton 1989). We can safely say that the search for origins is deeply-embedded in European culture and society. The study of the past has several characteristics that make it valuable to nationalist (and thus imperialist) agendas: its evidence is versatile; it requires interpretation and thus is flexible; it is old, especially relevant given the general paucity of information on ancient origins (Diaz-Andreu & Champion 1996); it is spontaneous and able to “avoid the deceit of historical writing” (Rowlands 1994) and can provide symbols, important for the creation of myths (Smith 1996).

The direct link between ‘archaeological cultures’ and ethnic groups is now made more wary. Archaeologists are drawing more heavily on the work of anthropologists for the theoretical approach to ethnicity, and most are sceptical about the one-to-one correlation between material culture or practice with a single identifiable ethnic group. Jones identifies three main problems with the idea of ‘archaeological cultures’ as ethnic entities: “the assumption of the equivalence of archaeological culture and past peoples’ (culture history framework); the actual existence of archaeological cultures; “there are no such entities as ‘cultures’ simply the contingent interrelations of different distributions produced by different factors” (Shennan 1989, 12); and lastly “the very existence of ethnic groups as fixed bounded entities” (Jones 1997, 109–10).

Yet despite this striking shift in the discipline, European policy-makers during the 1990s continued to find themselves facing challenging situations concerning heritage. Much rests on the practice of searching for identity using material culture. In a world where primordialist views of identity as deep, inner and permanent have the greatest power in the popular arenas (and therefore are the views that are manipulated by specific groups including actual and would-be politicians) archaeology is in an apparently privileged position due to its access to the long-term past. Historical texts are combined with archaeological evidence and thus ethnics are traced back in time. Archaeological ideas are used for the invention of tradition and to “constitute a community of shared memory” (Jones 1997, 133). In this view, the past is created in order to meet current needs. One could argue that European conventions have embraced this approach whole heartedly and are trying to turn it to their own, positive, advantage.

2. Heritage and the European project

Over the last two decades, new understandings of the way we view the past have started to emerge that appear to offer different opportunities. Interdisciplinary work between the museum, archaeological and conservation sectors have led to the emergence of Heritage as a profession, a legal concept, and an academic discipline. In its early years as a discipline, the so-called heritage-baiters (Lowenthal 1985, 1998; Samuel 1994; Hewison 1987; Walsh 1992) critiqued ‘Eurocentric’ and ‘historical approaches’ to heritage (Butler 2006) focusing on the ‘rise of heritage’ as a discipline with an Enlightenment mission (Lowenthal 1985, 1998) that foments national conflict (Layton 1989). The inspiration for this has in part been a reaction to calls for social justice from long-excluded minorities, in part due to perceived tensions and anxieties arising from demographic change, increased mobility and the experience of inter-community conflict. Within museum studies, the ‘new museology’ movement has given prominence to the role of culture in development and social change (Kreps 2003), incorporating notions of social justice that emerged from the insistence of minorities insistence to have a right to be included in national histories (Scham & Yahya 2003); the rise of ‘subaltern’ studies has contributed to this (Bhabha 1996, Spivak 1998). Interdisciplinary work now explores the use of museums, archaeology and conservation for reconciling conflicting interpretations of the past and present (Butler 2001, 2006; Scham & Yahya 2003). This agenda has wider relevance in debates on the philosophy of multiculturalism and definitions of community and their links to globalism, transnationalism and diaspora (Appadurai 1996).

The Council of Europe’s response has been to seek new understandings of what it means to be European, and of what Europe means. Heritage makers have shifted the boundaries of the definition of a nation and its heritage. Sassitelli (2009) has shown how in recent years both landscape and culture have been used instrumentally through pan-European structures to foster a sense of being European. At first, as the countries of Central and South Eastern Europe were drawn into the EU’s narratives of integration and enlargement, policy makers turned to “the idea of an intangible, ancestral ‘European culture’ to give an identity to what is geographically ‘only a peninsula on the western end of the super continent that includes all of Asia…and Africa as well” (Jones & Graves-Brown 1996, 9).

Following this initial phase of making Europe, a remarkable volte-face in what is desirable as heritage occurred, turning from the monumental to the everyday, from national glories to diverse multiple cultures. Where multi-ethnic populations were once shameful barriers to a homogenous nation-state, they are now a resource (Ditchev 2002). At best, this project is cosmopolitan in nature as it aims to unite disparate groups under a common goal. At worst, it legitimises a civilizing role for a majority heritage over minorities whose 21st century marginality is legitimized by being extended into the past. Another tactic is valuing diversity per se, without reference to power relations in the past or present.

The importance of the Council of Europe’s discourse on diversity must be placed into context of UNESCO’s Convention on the Protection and Promotion of the Diversity of Cultural Expressions, adopted in October 2005. This document was a response to criticism of Universalising mission of UNESCO and its concept of Outstanding Universal Value. It has been argued that it represents a response to much feared homogenising effects of globalisation in which cultures are like species and can become extinct. Diversity can also be seen as a code word for dialogue and reconciliation, which are
4. Common European heritage: reinventing identity through landscape and heritage?

4.1. Introducing the Landscape Convention

Faro has a sister convention: Florence, the European Landscape Convention (the ELC, Council of Europe, 2000). This treats landscape as a matter of human perception, and sees it as an idea as well as an object. It is also seen as something lived (performed, acted, constructed) as well as something enjoyed or used; object/subject, insider/outsider come together in landscape. It can be researched, managed protected for itself (or more accurately for the values that people put into it) but it can also be used as an analytical tool, as a frame or as a way of thinking to tackle other problems and achieve other goals. The ELC defines landscape as “an area, as perceived by people, whose character is the result of the action and interaction of natural and/or human factors”, thereby reminding us that landscape is an act of perception that locates the past firmly into a contemporary, present day, context. Landscape also holds people’s memories and folklore, and contains stories that are both personal and collective, and as such looks to a post-nation, multicultural state for inspiration (Hall 2000).

This democratic multivocal strain can be seen throughout Faro, which posits the role of heritage communities operating in the same ways as individuals; perhaps archaeologists are one (or more likely many) such communities. In this way the convention aims to democratise the valuing process: heritage cannot easily be restricted to “official” actions or laws. It includes the most basic and egalitarian processes of a person’s being and becoming in the world. Expert, official or orthodox ways of seeing or valuing heritage remain valid but they are now set increasingly against all the other plural ways of seeing and acting. Some of these other value systems may not be scientific or objective, but they can still be part of this wider heritage. This system relies on a functioning democratic heritage process, as is also recommended in the framework convention.

5. Integrated Landscape Research

A third key and even more recent document is “Landscape in a Changing World – Bridging Divides, Integrating Disciplines, Serving Society”, the latest (no. 41) in a series of ‘Science Policy Briefings’ prepared and published by the European Science Foundation and in this case in conjunction with the EU COST Office (ESF 2010). Launched in October 2010 to coincide with the 10th anniversary of the European Landscape Convention, it sets out a very broad, action-oriented, definition of landscape research. It was the product of an interdisciplinary Network of Networks chaired by Prof. Tom Bloemers, which had its starting point in the humanities and included mainly academics from archaeology and related historical studies but it also made space for cultural geographers, landscape architects, ecologists and researchers from the environmental sciences and ecology. It explores and demonstrates the ways in which landscape can contribute to addressing major social and economic as well as environmental policy challenges facing European society and governance, explicitly crossing both national and disciplinary boundaries, and for that matter the higher even more deeply-rooted domain boundaries between e.g. Natural Science and the Humanities.

The Landscape SPB is an important document because it puts landscape research as a wide-ranging holistic field of study spanning all disciplines on the same level in policy terms as the ‘hard sciences’ that form the subject of most SPBs. It firmly places cultural and arts and humanities-based concerns on an equal footing with environmental or ecological issues. It is also important because it calls for greater debate and integration at translational European levels and suggests the establishment of a Forum and research strategy for policy-oriented landscape research. In this it fits well with the ELC which sees landscape as an integrating concept spanning all levels of society and crossing borders; like Faro it looks for the social value of environmental and landscape heritage. It explores how the process and results of landscape research can help politicians, policy-makers and society at large to
address major current challenges from climate change to demographic changes, migration and food security; or rather how it not so hampered and held back by disciplinary fragmentation and weak connection to present day concerns.

6. Challenges from changing contexts

Florence and Faro explicitly locate themselves within a changing world where grand challenges seem to face society on all fronts. The reaction to this change has not been to heighten the ramparts of the heritage fortress or to try to protect the highlights (as Valletta and Granada too; they are reactive instruments). All three manifestos try to suggest that heritage in its various manifestations – culture, landscape, place, identity – is a powerful tool for dealing with those grand challenges. Faro speaks of the role of heritage in resolving and avoiding conflict, as a unifying not dividing force; Florence speaks of landscape as way of shaping a better world in future, allowing material and emotional adaptation for example. The SPB, perhaps most explicitly of the three, suggests that landscape research (and landscape performance etc) can help to address the challenges on a wide range of fronts and contribute to solutions.

There is no need to rehearse them in detail (see the SPB itself) but they might be usefully summarised to set the scene a little more:

**Social** issues include people’s quality of life and community identities, to which ‘place’ and therefore both heritage and landscape make a key contribution.

**Political** issues: Faro is informed by the rising importance of minority rights, a concept that was internationalised by the OSCE in the early 1990s, when multiculturalism began to take precedence over universalism (Chandler, 1999). The creators of the Faro Framework convention were at pains as how to describe the various peoples that had an interest in heritage, and by using the term ‘heritage communities’ their aim was to sidestep some difficult questions concerning ethnicity.

**Demographic** issues such as migration. People carry their heritage with them, in memory if not physically; they will sometimes share it on arrival and they will find (and make new, though different ways of valuing) the existing heritage of their new country. European heritage exists on other continents, and people on other continents have heritage in Europe. Government definitions of heritage are poorly fitted to such fluid and ever-changing circumstances.

**Economic** aspects of heritage are often seen as related to tourism, the modern golden goose, but heritage contributes much more broadly than that to the whole economy, in just the same way as society’s other fundamental resources such as land, people or raw materials. It stands in the very mainstream of economic activity. High quality of place attracts business, employment, people; good quality landscapes which for many people means those with strong historic and cultural dimensions, support successful economies.

**Environmental** issues may concern ‘Nature’ but it is also an unavoidable truth that life is lived amongst what was made before, and that includes current biodiversity, for example, as much as landscape. We do not have a natural environment but a highly humanised, artificial, modified one; furthermore, the main ways that people view the environment and construct their mental landscapes are cultural and social, not environmental. Solutions to environmental problems first of all need to be social solutions.

7. Aiming to be ordinary

Faro pushes heritage into the mainstream of all aspects of government and societal policy and economic activity. Florence says that about landscape, too.

Faro insists that cultural heritage is a basic part of people’s lives, part of identity, an essential component of ‘place’, a foundation for quality of life. This is in line with ‘Western’ meta-narratives of ‘universalism’, ‘rationality’ and ‘civilisation’ (Butler 2003) which are the foundational myths of European and international organisations whose standards are driven by ‘Western’ concepts of human rights and the individual. Nor does heritage have a closed, finite definition; it is a continuous process of ‘working towards’. Heritage is constantly re-made, made as well as inherited. The main frontier that Faro urges us to cross is therefore to change heritage from being treated as a limited number of assets to be kept from harm, to being something universal and ubiquitous. This is about the use of the past in the present and its renewal into the future. A living heritage is a changing heritage.

If we accept heritage’s role in creating futures, it follows that heritage objects, like landscape, accommodate different, divergent or even competing demands of that future. Reconciliation of conflicting values is central to Faro. One of the clearest tools that the Council of Europe proposes to combat aggressive ethnic-nationalism in Faro is the concept of ‘Common European Heritage’. This notion is useful as it certainly does not claim to propose a unified identity, a particular period or type of heritage and this is a refreshing change from much discussion of the culture, geography or religion that should define ‘Europe’. It does something more sophisticated and nuanced: it proposes a common heritage of ideas, whether political or social, which can meet at the crossroads of several affiliations. These concepts should not be extended back in time and influence our interpretations, but rather that they influence our approach to interpretation. Whether it is interpreted as cross-border heritage, the right to express culture, a shared responsibility for heritage or a troubled past of dissonant and difficult memories: it should be managed as a whole rather than in terms of parallel aggressive competing nationalisms.

It could be argued that this concept is of more use than ‘universal value’ or ‘world heritage’, both of which have been shown to be very powerful in fomenting conflict (such as at Bamyan, Afghanistan to name but one example) as well as in post-conflict situations such as in Kosovo. In the years following the NATO intervention, a great deal of money was spent on restoring and promoting tolerance for a ‘diversity of heritage’. Heritage workers underlined the importance of safeguarding Kosovo’s “universal and diverse heritage”. In doing so, they were expressing their desire for all of Kosovo’s communities to have equal rights in deciding on Kosovo’s political status. However, this
apparent flattening of the hierarchies of values was not implemented, as the actual criteria for restorations were invariably historic and architectural (Wolferstan 2006). The idea of ‘Common European Heritage’ can escape this universal / diversity double bind. Central to all this is the idea of the ordinary. There is not really a place in this heritage paradigm for ‘canons’, whether national or ethnic. This is clearly a move away from monumental (and outstanding universal) values. Instead values arise locally, from the grassroots. There is constructive tension between ubiquity (and therefore ‘ordinariness’) and local distinctiveness. ‘Ubiquity’ is a reminder that the remains and influence of the past exists everywhere and not only in ‘heritage places’. ‘Distinctiveness’ reminds us of the overwhelming importance of a specific place (at a variety of scales from village to pays) to determining people’s perceptions of landscape and their ways of being in the world. But what makes on place special is a matter of perspective. It follows that assumptions about authenticity, the originality of fabric, beauty and other externally imposed codes of aesthetics or value, the fetish of the patron or the famous architect /designer need to cede some of their priority to other concepts, such as for example palimpsest and change (the much altered can be more valuable for a number of reasons than the pristine or unchanged), context and setting and the other side of that coin, contributions and interactions, and finally character. One could say that the changes that Faro and Florence endorse are actually about the words that start and end that list – ‘fabric’ and ‘character’, representing a move from concern with physical fabric (with its correlation to the elemental components of heritage) to a concern with character (with its correlation with the whole as being more than the sum of the parts and as something which is essentially intangible. Indeed such a way of thinking makes all heritage intangible even when it is rooted in stone and earth.

Part 2 Case Studies

The following section focuses on five case studies that exemplify some of the themes mentioned above. The first example leads us to the Swedish forests, socially marginal today on many measures and generally treated as if historically marginal too. The second example concerns the ‘loss’ of land to urban growth, and how the pre-urban world through the application of archaeological knowledge and imagination become part of landscape again. The third borrows from a recent publication on Rome’s Via Tiburtina, its interdisciplinary approach simultaneously illuminating the message of the Landscape Convention about the experience of converting mere environment into a landscape “perceived by people” and exemplifying the Faro Convention’s claim that heritage is both individual and collective; it suggests ways of achieving some of the ambitions of the ESF/COST Landscape SPB. The fourth case study explores how an archaeological understanding of cold war material culture and heritage in a wider sense, understood through the lens of the Faro and ELC, may be a new take on European identity. The fifth and final example concerns Europe’s agricultural landscapes and presents a project that resulted in a study of temporal, spatial and functional complexity in landscape that crossed disciplinary boundaries, and ultimately commented on the national and sub-national diversity that provides the building blocks of pan-European landscape character.

1. The Swedish Forest, the edge of consciousness

A series of research projects looking at heritage, nature and culture and local and visitor attitudes have been carried out in recent years, notably those described in various publications by Skoglund and Svensson (eg 2010). These studies reflect on the tensions that exist between local and national priorities, lay and expert viewpoints, between nature and culture, and between farming and tourism: many of the topics raised by Florence and Faro. “Increased understanding and appreciation of heritage in forested landscapes is in the end an environmental issue. When the forest is no longer viewed as ‘pristine nature’ and the cultural impact of the past is acknowledged, the diverse forested landscapes may be better managed for future preservation then today and become a resource for local citizens as a source of pride and an asset for economical and sustainable development.” (Skoglund & Svensson 2010)

In marginalised areas such as woodlands, in the past and today, local rather than national heritage and history is particularly important when constructing identity, sense of place and community pride. Traditional ancient monuments may be less relevant to inhabitants than “fairly late remains such as deserted 19th century crofts”, or wolf traps, or features of local history is particularly important when constructing identity, sense of place and community pride. Traditional ancient monuments may be less relevant than “fairly late remains such as deserted 19th century crofts”, or wolf traps, or features of local interest. The idea of ‘Common European Heritage’ can escape this universal / diversity double bind.
transient and mundane that has traditionally escape conventional archaeology. It is the sort of heritage that in some ways creates the core of landscape, the concept supported by the ELC that landscape is not only great monuments but by the non-monumental structures of the land. It represents in part a rejection of the city, arising from the old city/country opposition, but also it surely represents a democratic urge of the majority to feel that heritage is not just that which is handed down de haut en bas, provided like bread and circuses or the scraps from a medieval lord’s kitchen, but as something personal; something to be constructed yourself not merely consumed, something active not passive. Problems arise however when attempts are made to wrap the local impulse to construct heritage from the inside within national or expert external criteria or to ‘capture’ public opinion. It can be argued, as Skoglund &Svensson do, that whilst top down ‘community or citizen participation’ initiatives are a form of democratisation, they might also lead to “the original force of community involvement, as a radical way of criticising the behaviour and decisions of authorities, commercial companies etc., (being) hollowed out as the action technique is taken over by the former targets of criticism” (Skoglund & Svensson 2010). One example is the instinct of national authorities to try to contain ‘local lists’ of historic buildings valued by the community in a mould of expert guidelines and criteria to preserve national standards and consistency; but a nationally-approved local list seems slightly oxymoronic. This is thus not unproblematic as it could be claimed that authority is self-perpetuating and self-defending and to some the idea of a ‘participatory’ structure can appear as a means of ‘licensing’ and thus controlling involvement at local and individual level. Again this is a conclusion that travels well out of the forest to other parts of Europe. It underpins the Faro Convention’s contention that everyone has both rights and responsibilities to respect that of others. This Swedish research also illuminates the effect on heritage of major social change, and thus the historical contingency of any particular heritage stance. Both the nature conservation and cultural heritage management movements have roots in the reaction against industrialisation and urbanisation, and indeed were often intertwined. It might be argued that they pulled apart during the 20th century with the increase in scientific specialism and the growing involvement of the national state. Today justification for nature preservation has shifted from national pride to a global environmental concern. It is perhaps ironic that blaming ‘globalisation’ in its economic and technological aspects for many if not most of the environmental threats that nature conservation bases itself on, is an environmental form of global rather than national patriotism.

We can turn from supposedly-marginal near-nature to supposedly central urban heartlands, from one side of the coin of 19th/20th century industrialisation and urbanisation – exile from the land, the loss of the local – to the other side, the flight to the city, the gain of another type of localness

2. Urban landscape, heart of modern life

The pre-urban world still exists below and within our sprawling modern cities, conurbations and peri-urban landscapes. To find them however requires us again to look at the ordinary, the intangible and the ghost-like. In fact, at what people think when they look at their streets; at the material aspects of their identity and at their connection to the past. The sometimes surprising survival of the skeleton of a pre-industrial world in the largest modern conurbations offers democratically-accessible links to the past. It is particularly relevant to understand cities as landscape because it is not only in England (one of the earliest countries to be industrialised) that ‘a romanticised rustic nostalgia’ take hold. It is important in the context of the spread everywhere of peri-urban or ex-urban landscape. Half (50%) of the world’s population is said to urban, but in Europe the figure is routinely higher, not just in the UK (89%) or Belgium (97%) but “even” in countries which are seen as and which present themselves as being almost natural wildernesses (eg, Norway 80% and Sweden 83%). France, still emotionally wedded to the idea of a fundamental rustic La France Profonde, where farmers on the street can still have real political weight, comes in at 76%; Finland stands at 67% urban, Hungary at 66% and Poland at 62%. The percentage falls below 50% only in a few countries (Albania 44% and Bosnia 45%); and only in very tiny islands do we drop to significantly low figures (Faeroes 39%, Jersey/Guernsey). The town and the city is thus for most people in Europe their daily heritage. We must ask what this means for attitudes towards heritage and landscape, culture and identity. If to engage Swedish forest dwellers in heritage requires us to notice the recent, the mundane and the local, then to engage urban dwellers in any way other than as tourists in another land will require us to look at urban landscape, their daily scene.

Towns and cities often have a pre-industrial layer to their mainly urban landscape, surviving fossil-like within the overlying urban sediments; an underlying structure of streets and property boundaries that has proved most enduring in urban morphology. These fossils may be disregarded but can have a role in modern popular perception of landscape and

Fig. 4.2: The layered heritage of cities, here Evora (Portugal).
townscape. They need not have any so-called intrinsic historical or architectural value but their value lies in their contribution to place, character and landscape. The majority of the population do not live in, or even very close, to ‘cultural monuments’; their personal ‘historic environments’ are very often more mundane places that are no less socially or psychologically important for being ordinary. If we accept that the past is omnipresent, and that ‘landscape’ (townscape) is how people relate to their world, then it would seem to be vital to help people understand the historic dimension of their environment not least due to their potential as an instrument of democratic engagement, one of the Council of Europe’s central missions. In contrast, of course, there is interest in studying areas and periods when the pre-industrial landscape was comprehensively erased for reasons of ideological modernity (the modernist ambition of starting again) or market economics (to maximise profits). In another, much older urban context, we see a different approach to heritage and landscape, one where everything seems to be kept, piled on top of one another, thrown together not planned by function, and where again it is the roads – movement not settlement – that persist the longest, in a city from which all roads radiated – Rome.

3. The Via Tiburtina, the centrality, depth and persistence of time

The book: *Via Tiburtina: Space, Movement and Artefacts in the Urban Landscape* (Blur & Frizell 2009) was written in by a group of spatial planners, archaeologists, heritage manager, sociologists, artists and writers to examine the road from Rome to Tivoli from an interdisciplinary landscape perspective and from the viewpoint of a continuum of time from prehistory to the present day. But it is not a history of the road; instead it is a dissection of the remains of the road’s long past in the contemporary world with a view towards the one hand its future evolution and on the other towards trying to grasp at its social meanings. “*Via Tiburtina*” matches Faro and ELC’s vision – the social and economic benefits of heritage and landscape; its aesthetics or design, urban as well as rural, ordinary and degraded as well as special. It shows us that heritage is static in neither its temporal nor its spatial dimensions; much of the book is about movement. It can be read as a commentary on the Faro Convention, with heritage as a dynamic process as well as the ‘stuff’ that we preserve. Most importantly, it was conceived as a multidisciplinary, cross-period analysis of a tract of land that is loaded with historical associations but that is easy to dismiss as chaotic modern urbanism. It represents not the rural, agricultural or pastoral landscapes that are often the subject of such research, but the messy, ever-changing landscape of ancient urban cores surrounded or invaded by suburbs and being by-passed by explosions of peri-urban and ex-urban ‘sprawl’. Not the ancient Rome of the visitor but the Rome of contemporary Romans. The book does not make value judgements about this land, but studies it exactly as it has been inherited. As one chapter title says ‘That’s (just) the way it is’ – neither good nor bad, neither beautiful nor ugly, but simply ‘there’. Viewed sociologically or archaeologically, or viewed through the lens of integrated landscape research, it becomes simply (or, rather, complexly) interesting, intriguing and informative.

Bronze Age transhumance route, Augustan road eastwards to the villas of Tivoli, the road along which travertine marble reached the city and its reports, today it is almost entirely flanked by frequently changing factories, warehouses, barracks, retail parks and mass housing a typology of 20th century social and economic transformations, a readymade narrative thread for the history(ies) of this broad corridor sweeping to or from the hills; a frame for depicting all the human life that has gone on here over 4000 years; it is a point of reference for modern life, teeming with traffic now like never before. Excavated fragments of Antiquity fit awkwardly into overlooked and passed by corners of modern suburban Rome. This book asks its readers to consider anew how past and present are constantly being reconciled.

The next case study also suggests that reconciliation of past and present is never a completed project.

4. Cold War; continuing pasts

In the search for a fully shared pan-European heritage we normally look for long-past unity and similarity (e.g. ‘The Bronze Age’, Hansa, Francia Media). We might choose something else however, for opposite reasons, something that unites because of its diverse indeed conflicting experience, something like the 40 or 50 year period that the West calls the Cold War, for example. This choice is particularly close to one of the Faro Convention’s and indeed the Council of European’s core mission, that of valuing Europe’s diversity as a resource for reconciliation.
The Cold War challenges archaeology to review its oft-unspoken assumptions about our relationship with the past and about how we use material remains to create present day perceptions and understanding. It is apparently a familiar, well-understood and straightforward topic. Yet its closeness to current politics both personal and national makes it a very problematic area to deal with, and raises in acute form many of Faro’s concerns and hopes about the use of heritage in politics. It provides a place to explore issues that are particularly relevant both to itself and to and other even more recent and bloodier recent conflicts, and which are at the same time relevant to our contact with any periods of the past. Its study readily transcends disciplinary barriers between archaeologists, historians, anthropologists, artists and writers (among others). The period’s material remains – simple concrete structures – also seem to invite simple concrete explanation, but studying the heritage of the Cold War will teach us not to take too innocent a view. Interpretation and meaning is not as clear-cut, but more questionable and unknown, than we might care to admit. If in landscape, everything turns out on closer examination to be usually “always older than you think”, then arguably material culture is always more complex than we think.

The meaning that people attribute to the Cold War continually changes. Still-unfolding world events cause people to re-examine interpretations; memory is modified by hindsight. Responses to the Cold War, as any recent still-relevant events, are constantly re-calibrated in the light of what has happened since. Do events in New York, Afghanistan or Iraq give us a new perspective on the national and international politics behind the Cold War? The Cold War was global but not homogenous. Not all its participants were willing, and not all involved governments with the same approach to openness and democracy; the extent to which the Cold War is documented world-wide varies enormously. However, the Cold War is so to speak still an undigested period, with little interpretative closure, its close proximity to our time (with all that implies for detachment or engagement) creating problems that we are only beginning to address, and all too often at mere site or structure scale. The very recent past and its legacy is not merely the latest ‘layer’ but is also the still-forming transition from past to the future, so that its study has lessons beyond its own results; it is the ‘contemporary past’, and it is still forming our future by guiding our thoughts about the world. As it starts to be perceived as being more distant, a more finished (and closed) episode of history, the seemingly instinctive human desire to find interpretative closure begins to take effect. Should archaeology facilitate that closure or challenge it? What the Cold War means to a military historian is likely to be very different to what it means to a social historian, as well as what it means to a conformist citizen or a non-conformist peace protestor. As an episode it never enjoyed a single narrative, and some of its narrative strands do not have a “history” (in the sense of history drawn from studying documents). Many of them, however, do have stories of other sorts, many of which can be approached through disciplines such as archaeology, anthropology, sociology and through the media of the visual and performing arts. Multi-vocality, of course, applies to analysis of all periods of the past, but it is simply more obvious and more unavoidable in recent periods. The simultaneous existence of evidence that is a-historical (through material culture, memory and oral traditions) and historical (through documents) is not new; they have co-existed for the past 2,000 years or more, but the former perhaps arises more prominently, consistently, fundamentally and challengingly (that is, more unavoidably and yet seemingly avoided) in recent periods.

People know about or even remember the period because they lived through it or their parents told them about it, or they have seen TV programmes about it. It therefore has a strong (if partly false) solidity and vividness for people, and ‘heritage’ (and landscape as perception) therefore becomes extremely personal. There are multiple heritages of the Cold War. To that personal plurality, can be added plurality deriving from the diversity of situations across the world. The relationships between the USA and its clients, and that between the USSR and its clients, were very different. It is the archaeological interpretation of material culture that will open new interpretations. Cold War material culture was not only very different between the western and eastern parts of Germany, but it must also have been very different between eastern Germany and Poland or the Czech Republic, just as the experiences of living through it were very different. To understand the Cold War, it needs to be contextualised into a wider social and political framework which also has its material culture.

Finally, let us move to something supposedly simpler, more clear cut, the comfortable warmth of traditional European (agri)cultural landscapes in all their romantic simplicity.

5. Agricultural landscapes, familiar complexity?

A recent Culture 2007 network project with active partners in about 12 countries and supporters in many more, EUCALAND (European Agricultural Landscapes) set itself as one its tasks to produce a classification of ‘traditional’ landscapes created through agricultural
activity (Fairclough, Turner et al. 2010). Work began with defining landscape as “an area, as perceived by people…”, that is an idea, a matter of subjective, personal and plural perception. Classification is normally applied to material, bounded objects, not the immaterial or interpretations. By definition agriculture is local, each community historically normally having access to most types of productive land in varying combinations and therefore classifying at a level above the regions necessarily ignores much local diversity (e.g. woodland or meadow resources, normally only one component of a whole system). At the same time, in recent centuries at least, agriculture has been partly market based, and a classification based on the local land use and framing practice has difficulty in coping with long distance movement of products. Finally, whatever diversity exists in the fabric and form of agricultural landscape, multiplied by the use of more than one scale, can pale into some insignificance when compared to the diversity across Europe (and between disciplines, but even that is secondary) in how landscape is understood, in what agricultural landscape in particular signifies in national, micro-national or community culture, and in the different weights given to different periods of change even within the 20th century.

The resultant attempt at classification started with a structure based on landscape attributes such as Identity, Patterns, Process, Change, Spatial Relationships, Social Organisation, and Topography, later partly simplified into descriptions based on four questions (What does this area look like, why is it distinctive? (Form/pattern); Why does it look like this? (Systems, processes/functions, systems); What is/was it connected with (social, legal and territorial connections); What happened to it before (preceding landscape) and since (e.g. successor landscape types, survival, condition, landscape influence). This helped to produce a suitably high level classification highlighting broad shared characteristics rather than the local differences that fragment understanding. It was inevitably tailored towards the visibility and ‘presence’ of more recent agricultural landscapes; because national differences are relatively well known the approach opted for pan-European classification underemphasise some of the differences between regions in order to give room to the attributes and characteristics that spoke of similarity and unity over large regions. These focus on broad agriculture processes and patterns, spatial relationships and territorial organisation, and the ever present issue of change, especially in long-term history, whilst locally-specific factors like topography, and regional and local names, were considered last of all. This attempt to produce a classification that might in a future project be applied to all or at least large parts of Europe at a truly European scale of generalisation stands as a test of the ideas about landscape as cultural construct enshrined in the ELC, looking at all areas not just the special. Its attempt to be interdisciplinary from a humanistic starting point puts some of the SPB ideas into practice. And the very ambition of trying to create a common map of Europe from a cultural and past-oriented viewpoint (as opposed to the more common maps based on land form or environment) offer a partial answer to Faro’s unanswered question of what precisely constitutes a common European heritage. It is something inherited but still living, still present. But other issues that arise from that include for instance how to contain at two extremes both local particularity and a sense of national exceptionalism within a context wide enough to reflect pan-European patterns and identities, and as with all interesting archaeological work, the Eucaland product did not presume to have found a right or final answer, merely to have revealed complexity and contingency.

This very preliminary classification (even without a mapped version) shows how landscape might be drawn away from its traditional focus on the natural and the topographic, on biodiversity and scenery, towards a more cultural, people-centred construction such as promoted by the European Landscape Convention. It demonstrates some of the contrasts and comparisons that can be made between different countries, not merely in terms of variations in landscape but more interestingly in variations in how landscape is understood. These differences underline the value of working across and beyond our traditional national borders. Even in its present undeveloped form, the emerging classification justifies the efforts of Eucaland and similar projects to work across the whole face of Europe in search of European as opposed to national heritages, difficult though it is. It also shows how heritage within landscape (or landscape as heritage) offers new perspectives on what the Florence (Landscape) and the Faro (Social Value of Cultural Heritage) conventions seek to achieve, providing an enlarged view of how landscape and heritage can be constructed within a wide public mentality.

**Some conclusions**

There is strong solidarity between the concepts of heritage and landscape, and the two Conventions are unsurprisingly complementary. They both for example lead us to define heritage not only as “the things we wish to pass on” but embraces “everything we have inherited” irrespective of whether some of us wish to...
keep them intact to pass on to our successors. Passing heritage on to our successors (‘keeping’) is just one way of responding to this inheritance; there are other ways, such as celebrating it as it fades away or is transformed, or using it to effect a transformation, converting it (e.g. by excavation or analytical demolition) into evidence, or even using its destruction to symbolise something else.

The equation in recent decades of “heritage” with only the parts we try to keep (e.g. the Burra Charter definition) has created many of the economic and political barriers that constrain the heritage process and it risks dividing past from future, breaking the continuity. It also risks overlooking common heritage in favour of an official selection or canon; it may create a self-defeating dichotomy between heritage and change. Faro offers an alternative more holistic approach.

The greatest value of the idea of landscape as promoted through the ELC is surely that it concerns human habitat and habits. It is conceptualised in the ELC definition as the product of people’s perceptions. The ELC also carries within it the message that landscape because it is personal and ideational, is amongst other things a materialisation of human rights. But landscape is as much a part of heritage as heritage is of landscape, each nested inside the other (a little Mobius strip-like), and seeing landscape as heritage, not as nature or scenery opens landscape to Faro’s view that people have both rights to the definition and assessment of landscape on the one hand and rights (and responsibilities) to manage and plan it for the future on the other; part of the creation of future heritage, future landscape. Likewise seeing heritage as landscape, and not as discrete ethnic cultures (read nations) helps us move past the idea of parallel aggressive nationalisms rooted in an ancient (often golden) past.

But neither heritage nor landscape should only be located within the local sphere. That would risk encouraging an exceptional-ism and a preservationism that is only able to oppose change and which fails to recognize ubiquity and commonality, and would easily reinforce nationalist viewpoints or exclude the increasingly common phenomenon of needing to find room amongst landscape and heritage values of longer-term inhabitants for the possibly different ways of ‘seeing’ the heritage of incomers/immigrants, both permanent and temporary, whether moving because of increased mobility, demographic change, rising seas or encroaching deserts or the draw of the expanding city.

Local distinctiveness can be protected by other means and landscape and heritage are not our only tool. In contrast, what the ELC concept of landscape or Faro’s concept of heritage offers is a new tool for working with more global or at least continental perspectives. Indeed, it has been argued that local and global perspectives can rarely be separated, and it would be more accurate to say that such categories co-exist. At the end of the debate, perhaps paradoxically, landscape is not rooted in space but site within perception and is therefore as mobile and fluid. Landscape and heritage can be and are shared, exchanged, merged. Whereas it is often claimed that landscape equates to the local whilst environmental equates to the global, there is room to argue the opposite (Germundsson et al. 2011).

We can speak of nationally-shared landscapes, regional landscape, and thus even of a European landscape: a concept which many people seem to find difficulty with but only if it is taken to mean a singular landscape. ‘The European landscape’ in contrast is a mosaic landscape, a global overarching synthesis, a composite and in this sense it lends itself well to Faro’s ‘Common European Heritage’. In Europe, landscape was once constructed and used (like heritage) as an attribute of nationhood. Recently it has increasingly been assigned to the local (the notion of branding, for example, and of ‘place’) or the sub-national regional (through for example the idea of character areas, and natural areas) scales. The ELC and the Faro Convention offers a prospect of landscape and cultural heritage being placed at pan-European and supra-national regional scales. Place is local; landscape need not be.

The desire to embrace local and global is the essence of the cosmopolitan values of organisations such as the Council of Europe, and are embodied in their most recent heritage and landscape conventions: ‘Even though you might not share the same heritage values as me the respect for it should be a universal right across Europe, a Common European Heritage’ they claim. At a conceptual level this form of cosmopolitan multiculturalism is not oppositional to nationalism as cultural difference has always been central to the formation of nations that are ever heterogeneous (Cornwell & Stoddard 2001, 3). So in themselves, they do not resolve the ethno-identification dilemma of the European project. Yet they are a constructive response to heavily critiqued approaches that such organisations have promoted in the past.

References


