

Dimensions of Heritage and Memory

Multiple Europes and the Politics of Crisis

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creative documentary film

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1 Preface (the editors)

This chapter is a set of accounts of the film *Who is Europe?* It is a conversation between the filmmaker and the editors of this book, some of whom were directly involved in the filmmaking too. It is a good idea to watch the film before reading on. It is available at <https://vimeo.com/303706985>.

As discussed in Chapters 1 and 2, we are concerned with understanding the dialectics of ‘Europe’ and ‘European heritage’ as they are fashioned in different dimensions, understood as technical and affective spaces, each with different discursive and representational possibilities. Alongside this, we have also sought to multiply the dimensions of our own scholarly enquiry into the nature and situation of ‘European heritage’. We have been keen to work with creative, critical practitioners who could find within the overall theme of European Heritage different subjects, sites and insights, through poetic, visual and sonic research. The resulting initiatives were also – like this book – documentary in different ways; they were also ‘retellings’ of Europe, but through different representational languages and media, and with different affects and effects. One such collaboration involved the production of an oratorio – *Rivers of our Being*² – by Latvian composer and ethnomusicologist Valdis Muktupāvels, representing a musical meditation on the confluence of European folk musics and the fluid nature of identities. Another key collaboration was with filmmaker Ian McDonald, director of Newcastle University’s Research Centre for Film, whom we asked, and worked with, to develop a one-hour film in six acts to respond to the different facets of the CoHERE project.

The film premiered in Warsaw at the CoHERE Final Conference in November 2018 at POLIN Museum of the History of the Polish Jews, before being screened at a range of other European research fora. The six acts of the film are – like this book – not intended to be representative of Europe as a whole, nor of its heritage, but to find spaces where critical, sometimes seemingly insoluble, problems are entangled with European pasts, or where heritage is at work in different ways, transforming social and political realities and imaginaries of the present. Some of this inevitably concerns a backward-facing orientation, for

example as *Alternative für Deutschland* (AfD) supporters mobilise memories of the Allied bombardment of Dresden in Act 1 of the film. In other cases, as with Act 3, the emergence of a newly securitised border is a new marker of and through ‘European space’, resonating with other, more famous and heritagised, walls and borders such as the Berlin Wall. While this new Hungarian border wall is of the present, it is also a future memory, a new iteration in the palimpsest of divisions and orderings of Europe and its peoples. Of course, it is about the past in other ways, in its function as a barrier to migrants from war-torn Syria whose reasons for fleeing to Europe are hooked into long geohistories in which the reach and power of Europe has fundamentally configured both global political dynamics and the Middle East itself. A longer historical perspective – going at least as far back as the Allied partitioning of the Ottoman Empire after World War I, shows up the causal chains that lead to global crisis and deadly problems in the present. These crises are anything but just contemporary, although we rarely hear historical perspectives on the news that would show otherwise. This film is a pluralised meditation on the processual ontology of Europe, working its way through past-present-future dialectics and what in Chapter 2 we called ‘the intersectionality between geography, history, politics and identities that are core matrices of heritage’. The acts of the film all represent particular dimensions of the making of Europe – whether in macro or micro – that show up some of its fault lines, edges, undersides and seams in a way likely to complicate any earnest monological explanation of things.

We are concerned here, then, with a double sense of dimension: it is in the sites and lives of the subjects documented in the films. But the films themselves are a dimension of enquiry – a ‘technical and affective space’ in themselves, that offers alternative visions and understandings. In what follows, McDonald provides an experiential and intellectual account of his practice in the making of the films. After this, we (the book-editors) engage in commentary.

2 The Filmmaker comments

i Disciplinary territories: AHD and CHS

First, a confession. When I was asked if I would be interested in producing a series of short films in connection with the research project of which this book is part, I agreed, even though I (thought I) had no particular interest in heritage or knowledge of debates in Heritage Studies. I had assumed that Heritage Studies was about the importance of restoring and preserving historic buildings, statues, artefacts and the like, and was irredeemably linked to conservative agendas and the defence of tradition and even privilege. I agreed to take on this brief because I had an interest in making films about the turbulent politics of contemporary Europe, especially as they pertained to the crisis of the idea/ideal of Europe in the wake of the financial crash of 2008, austerity, the rise of populisms, xenophobia and the mass migration of refugees. There were very real dramas being played out across Europe that appealed to me as a documentary filmmaker

interested – to paraphrase CW Mills (1959) – in how public issues are played out as private troubles.

However, to my pleasant surprise, I soon learned that a more critical take on Heritage Studies has emerged over the past couple of decades, generally referred to as Critical Heritage Studies (CHS). Scholars aligned to this movement had named and critiqued the dominant ‘conservative’ approach in Heritage Studies as ‘Authorised Heritage Discourse’ (AHD), following Laurajane Smith’s definition (see Chapters 1 and 2 this volume). They proposed an alternative epistemological framework which heralded a more radical approach to the study *and uses* of heritage. As the editors put it in Chapter 1:

Heritage is not contained to a list or set of sites, objects and practices. Rather, it circulates continuously – and often somewhat uncontrollably – through private and public space, experience, imagination and discourse, at different scales, and in dynamic relations with contemporary social, economic, cultural and geo-politics.

It was clear that a serious engagement with the fallout of the global economic crises and the seismic political shift and social problems afflicting Europe required a sustained engagement with the past, not simply as ‘history’ in the sense of the time before now, but rather as the past packaged as a ‘resource’ to be used/abused in various, sometimes nefarious, ways in current movements and debates to wield control over the present in order to shape the future. Suddenly heritage became interesting! Discovering Critical Heritage Studies had an intoxicating effect on me as a filmmaker as it opened up exciting possibilities for thinking about how documentary film could creatively engage with heritage practices as an active force in the lived experiences of individuals, communities and nations today.

The point of this confessional introductory point is not to assuage any guilt on my part (there was none!), but to signal a key premise of these films. I was not engaged in an exercise of making ‘Heritage films’, but rather of making films about the crisis of identity in contemporary Europe through the prism of heritage. Or to put it another way, the films were conceived as provocations about the place of heritage practices (including discourses and disciplines) in the construction of identities in Europe. Following John Pilger’s declaration that, ‘European Oneness is Propaganda’ (2019), the films are polemics against normative claims of a common European heritage. Thus, conceptually, a series of dualisms and contradictions underpin the filmic treatment: us and them, here and there, official and unofficial, ideals and ideology. Ultimately these dualisms were to find expression in the split-screen format where images are set against and for each other in a dialectical fashion to construct additional meanings.

ii Creative documentary practice and academic research

Early conversations focused on the nature and purpose of the film. The initial proposition was that the film would showcase a selected aspect of the research

and be used as part of the dissemination of the research process and findings. However, this ‘service-provider’ model places limits on the autonomy of the filmmaker and of possibilities of critique. I offered an alternative model, based on the ‘filmmaker-in-residence’ model, in which the filmmaker has the autonomy to critically and creatively *respond* to the research questions and activities. The intention here is to use film to open up different perspectives and ways of thinking about heritage practices in current issues in ways that (hopefully) enrich rather than simply reflect the research activities of others.

The brief was to make a single film made up of six short films, each associated and responding to each of the six CoHERE ‘work packages’.³ While each film could be viewed as a stand-alone film, they take on additional meanings and have a cumulative effect when viewed in sequence alongside the other films. A dialogue occurs within the films, but also between films. This dialogue may be very direct: the border barriers and Islamophobic testimonies of the German nationalists taking refuge in Orbán’s Hungary in Act 3 *TOMPA* add a tragic dimension to the ill-fated dreams of the young Muslim men and boys in Act 5 *MELILLA*. Or this dialogue may be indirect: Act 2 *BOLOGNA* and Act 4 *BODRUM* are akin to archaeological digs – suggesting that by brushing away surface debris of apparently innocuous articulations and ‘expertly’ constructed arguments, it is possible to discern deeper, even seismic, cultural shifts and contrasting interpretations of history and cultural identity.

The preference for calling the separate films ‘Acts’ highlights the duality of the films – they are both separate but also interconnected. Though individual self-contained pieces, they are sequenced in such a way that a meta-narrative (about the role of the past in the present in sustaining ideas and ideals of Europe) emerges organically. For example, viewed by itself, Act 6 *RINGING FOR PEACE* could be conceived as ‘playing into’ an idealized, top-down but ultimately tokenistic nod to peace. The UN-backed International Day of Peace (or International Peace Day – IPD) is marked throughout Europe by a call for churches, city halls, belfries and memorials to ring their bells ‘for solidarity and peace’ and a celebration of ‘shared cultural heritage in Europe’. But coming after five films that in different ways explore how heritage practices are often mobilised in support of exclusion as much as peace and inclusion, the inherent ambiguity and contradictions of this initiative – however worthy – become audible.

iii The aesthetics of the split-screen

The split-screen – placing a frame/s within a frame – has a long history in the history of narrative cinema and in its more experimental forms is closely associated with the boom in video-art in the 1970s. However, since the advent of digital filmmaking from the 1990s and the rise of screen culture in the twenty-first century, split-screens are no longer perceived as novel or experimental. And yet according to Bizzocchi, ‘there is little theoretical work on the poetics or cinematic design of the split screen...filmmakers have paid more attention to the possibilities of the split-screen than the theorists’ (2009, p. 2). Indeed, in outlining

his approach to the multi-screen work, the artist and filmmaker John Akomfrah noted:

It's a choreographing, an orchestration of ideas and images and themes, deciding at any one time which screen will conduct and lead, as it were. You go over it again and again, and what you're left with in the end is a kind of mirror of your own thinking.

(Cited in Benson, 2015)

In a similar vein, the split-screen format of *WHO IS EUROPE?* constitutes 'a kind of mirror' of my own ambivalent thinking about the idea of Europe. The seed for the split-screen was sown at a particular moment during filming in Dresden. On 12 February, the day before official, annual commemorations of the Allied bombing of Dresden in 1945, I was filming the AfD's commemoration at the cemetery. The procession was led by leaders of the Young Alternative – the youth wing of the AfD. In disciplined fashion, these well-groomed incipient fascists led the march down the long gravel pathway through the grounds of the cemetery to lay flowers and wreaths at the base of the concrete memorial. What was interesting about this march was its performative nature, its long duration, its synchronised movement. The only way to capture this was to keep filming to get a sense of the relentless rhythm of their walking. As I was filming this phalanx my mind went back to another encounter with some very different young people on the first demonstration I shot in Dresden city centre on 10 February.

At the location of the final destination of the march, a group of teenaged girls were gathered and were joyfully practising a dance routine to the sound of a popular South Korean boy band. Among the group of about ten girls were two girls of South-East Asian origin, one of whom was leading the choreography. Fortunately, I had rushed to the head of the demonstration to catch a shot of its arrival and so was able to film the girls as they were practising and then catch their response to the arrival of the marchers. First the police and then the marchers themselves descended on the girls and chastised them for disrespecting the memory of the victims of Dresden bombing. What ensued was a tense stand-off with the girls, led by one girl in particular, defending their right to dance in the street, fending off accusations that they were being disrespectful and rejecting assertions that they were naïve in their embrace of 'foreign' people and 'cultures'. They, in turn, accused the demonstrators of racism.

Back at the cemetery, in stark contrast were the 'Young Alternative' from the AfD – white, xenophobic, masculinist, and here dancing in the streets were the 'young alternative' represented by the girls – multicultural, anti-racist, empathetic. It was a riveting encounter between the confident teenage girls and the boorish demonstrators. I knew this encounter had to be in the film. Each provided the perfect foil or asymmetry between two visions of the future. The split-screen idea was born and it was clear that the rest of the Dresden footage and the rest of the short films would have to follow suit so that I could do justice to this idea.

Bizzocchi notes that the primary contribution of the split-screen to film language is the idea of ‘spatial montage’ in which ‘multiple cinematic frames offer narrative paths where montage in time [editing] is no longer privileged over montage [in space]’ (2009, p. 3). Spatial montage is used to good effect in many of the acts. For example, in *DRESDEN*, the focus is on action in both frames, sometimes in different spaces (such as the aforementioned coupling of the teenage girls dancing and youth wing leading the commemoration march) and sometimes in the same space (such as the counter demonstration to the AfD commemorations). Here, the visuals are in dialogue with each other – left versus right, multi-culturalism versus mono-culturalism, remembrance versus opportunism. By way of contrast, the split-screen in *BODRUM*⁴ adheres to a more conventional ‘montage in time’ approach, where arguments and counter-arguments are posed in succession and the split-screen is composed of a main frame and supporting frame – with the main frame being used to advance a key point (usually in the form of an interview) and the supporting frame used to support/complement or illustrate the point.

A different approach to interview footage is used in *TOMPA*. Here the testimony of two right-wing nationalists, self-proclaimed ‘migrants’ from Germany now living in what they perceive as the safety of Orbán’s Hungary, is challenged and problematised with visuals of high-security fences, helicopters monitoring borders, and shots of dilapidated houses and disused buildings up for sale. While in *MELILLA*, the aim was to take advantage of the split-screen to maximise the opportunity for the young migrants to tell their stories, vent their rage, express their dreams of a better future on the European mainland. This deliberate overloading of images and excess partly follows the logic of Abel Gance’s 1927 epic *Napoleon* where he developed the concept of poly-vision as a means of dealing with excess. The fact that he was unable to contain the epic battle images within a single frame led him to project across three screens. *MELILLA* culminates in a deliberate assault on any liberal sensitivities of the audience as the young migrants circle the camera and look straight into the lens to directly assail audiences with a litany of accusations and abuse. Towards the end, the subtitles cease to translate this ‘disrespectful’ cacophony and instead provide audiences with some ‘respectful’ information from tourist marketing of the city – ‘AHD’, if you will – to mute the boys. Thus, historical facts about the colonial heritage of Melilla and its architecture and monuments, concluding with a note that in 2016 Melilla was awarded European City of Sport status, replace the actual words of the boys! However, I have given the last words to the migrants. The parting words of a young African migrant are: ‘Speak in your own words. Don’t speak in your fuckers’ words’.

iv Modes of embodied observational film practice

In my documentary practice, I embrace the observational approach. Observing is necessarily perspectival and embodied. This notion of an embodied presence is particularly important for understanding how I approached the making of the

films. Lack of space here precludes a detailed examination of all the films, but I will focus in particular on two of the films that were most challenging to film and required careful negotiation and positioning: Act 1 *DRESDEN*, and Act 5 *MELILLA* with references to the other four films where appropriate.

a The feeling of 'being there'

Adopting the observational approach is both a political and aesthetic choice as well as a detached assessment of where my strengths lie as a filmmaker. Rooted in the tradition established by Direct Cinema in the USA in the 1960s and 1970s and carried on valiantly in the present by the octogenarian Fred Wiseman, the observational approach was made possible by the development of smaller hand-held cameras that were able to record synch sound, and enabled filmmakers to go into hitherto inaccessible worlds. This mode of documentary practice also constituted a searing criticism of the hitherto dominant expository mode of documentary practice which relied on the authoritative voiceover and expert talking-heads to construct an argument for the audience and effectively reduced sound and images to the status of illustrations, what the observational filmmaker Al Maysles disparagingly called 'illustrated lectures'. According to Richard Leacock, a leading figure in the Direct Cinema movement, the task of observational filming is to capture events as they unfold in order to give the audience a visceral sense of 'being there':

Many filmmakers feel that the aim of the filmmaker is to have complete control. The conception of what happens is limited to the conception of the filmmaker. We don't want to put this limit on actuality. What's happening, the action, has no limitations, neither does the significance of what's happening. The filmmakers' problem is more a problem of how to convey it. How to convey the feeling of being there (cited in Winston, 2008, p. 150).

Observational filmmakers aim to 'show' rather than 'tell', in order to capture reality and produce an authentic account of 'being there'. The idea of 'being there' is not simply a feeling that the filmmaker seeks to evoke in the audience but also touches on something more ontologically significant – that is that the filmmaker's 'being' was actually 'there' and so what is captured is ineluctably perspectival and an acknowledgement of the inherent subjectivity of the process. As Carta (2015, p. 3) pithily states, 'Observational films show not only the people who were filmed but also the filmmaker's act of observing.'

b Heritage and Filmic embodied practices: Dresden

It was the very first shoot. My early morning flight from Newcastle via Amsterdam to Dresden on 10 February 2018 landed around 2pm, which just about gave me time to get to the hotel in the centre of Dresden to drop my luggage and make the 15-minute walk to the shopping centre to film a joint AfD-Pegida rally and march. It was one of a series of political demonstrations held in Dresden over the weekend in the run-up to the official commemorations on 13 February

of the Allied firebombing of Dresden in 1945 (analysed in more detail in Eckersley, 2019). Speeches were being made when I arrived at a gathering of about 600 people. This number was to swell when the march started and gathered pace through the shopping centre *en-route* to the city-centre precinct under the shadow of the reconstructed Frauenkirche.

Though the demonstration was organised by the ‘Young Alternative’, I was struck by how aged the crowd was – the vast majority of people present were middle-aged to elderly, and all were white. I do not speak German and though I can usually pick up the gist of what is being said (mainly from the intonation and context) I was unable to follow the speeches in detail, but as a filmmaker I was there to film the ‘event’, not to report on the speeches. However, as I felt that my presence was noted, I thought it was prudent to be seen by the crowd to be filming the speeches to signal that I was interested in what was being said. After some time, I felt able to move among the crowd and capture faces and banners.

Given the ideological nature of the gathering, I was surprised that there were only a few banners on display, but those that I spotted summed up the political outlook. Two small homemade banners had the following slogans scrawled on them; ‘*Wo bleibt die Erfassungsstelle Salzgitter für die Opfer deutschenfeindlicher Migrantengewalt*’ (Where is the Salzgitter Registration Office for the victims of anti-German violence by immigrants) and ‘*Unbefristete Abschiebehaft für alle kriminellen Asylförderer*’ (Indefinite custody for all criminal asylum seekers) and two large banners ‘*Polizei und Bundeswehr stellt die Ordnung wieder her!*’ (Police and Armed Forces restore order!) and ‘*Kandel, Dresden, u. morgen Du? Cottbus, Berlin, Aufwachen oder Untergehen!*’ (Kandel, Dresden and tomorrow you? Cottbus, Berlin, wake up or go under!). Three more (professionally-made) banners were unfurled at the beginning of the march: ‘*Falsche Toleranz ist tödlich*’ (False tolerance is deadly), ‘*Sachsen schützen, Grenzen schließen!*’ (Protect Saxony, close the borders!) and ‘*Offene Grenzen sind tödlich*’ (Open borders are deadly). There were also very few flags on the march, but one large one stood out. It was a red flag with a yellow-rimmed black cross – a flag that I have since learned was historically associated with *anti*-Hitler resistance but is now appropriated by PEGIDA (Vorländer *et al.* 2018).

The sense that I was being watched – I felt partly out of curiosity but partly out of suspicion – increased as time passed. I was expecting to be approached and questioned. I have experienced similar shooting situations in potentially hostile environments and have learned that it is generally best to be polite, friendly and truthful but brief and factual, and most importantly to keep moving so as to discourage further conversation. A very austere-looking elderly female approached me and asked where I was from. I apologised, in English, to say that I did not speak German. She looked angry and exclaimed loudly – consequently attracting the attention of those around her – that I was not from Germany and demanded to know where was I from and why was I filming. With some trepidation I said I was a filmmaker from Britain and was here to film the commemorations of the 1945 bombing for an academic project. To my surprise (and relief),

she relaxed and beamed back at me. In her heavily German accented English, she said ‘British! Good good!’ and gave me a thumbs up. Word clearly went around that I was from Britain as I felt that the looks turned from suspicion to welcoming. At the time I was not quite sure what to make of this, but it soon became clear to me that being British was synonymous with supporting Brexit.

On one of the many subsequent occasions, this time during the commemorations held by the AfD in Altmarkt Square on the night of 13 February (which was met with a large and lively anti-fascist counter demonstration) I was taken to a prominent (and very imposing) man and it was explained to him that I was from Britain. He bellowed at me ‘Tommy Robinson! You know Tommy Robinson?’⁵ and put his thumbs up, looking for a similar response from me. Rather than reciprocate with the same gesture, I simply said that I certainly knew *about* Tommy Robinson. The man continued in stilted English to proudly declare that Tommy Robinson was a personal friend of his and that Robinson had recently visited Dresden to have talks with the AfD. He enquired again if I supported Robinson and Brexit. I was able to sidestep the question by keeping on the move and responding to someone else who asked if I was from the BBC (to which I said ‘sorry but no’).

Retelling these encounters is intended to convey the complex, often precarious and always negotiated process that goes into observational filmmaking. Observational filming involves spending time in the field and shooting a lot of footage. Of interest are not simply the overt actions (demonstrators marching, scuffles between opposing political forces etc.) but also the ‘down’ times, the casual conversations, the preparations and the aftermath. The observational filmmaker is present before the journalists (indeed the observational filmmaker films the journalists as they are also part of the action) and stays present until the demonstrators leave. The observational filmmaker’s presence is often more keenly felt because of ‘strange’ or untypical behaviour from a ‘media professional’. Unlike the typical video journalist, observational filmmakers do not ask questions or seek interviews, and unlike the television documentarist, no staging of action or request to repeat action is given. Such unobtrusiveness can sometimes lead subjects of the camera’s gaze to feel uncomfortable, with curiosity turning to suspicion. In the case of Dresden, often accompanied by my German-speaking colleague (and co-editor of this volume) Susannah Eckersley, I filmed the AfD over three days, often the same people in different contexts. And yet, I never asked questions or interviewed their leaders, which led eventually to many of them asking questions of me!

When I filmed on ‘the other side’ in the anti-fascist counter demo in Altmarkt Square on 13 February, there was a different set of responses to negotiate. In some ways, these activists, mainly young men and women, many of whom had their faces covered, were very wary of being filmed. Their experience of being filmed by the police and by the mainstream media reinforces the idea of the camera as an instrument of surveillance and demonisation. In such circumstances, my demeanour changed. Of course, I had every right to film the protesters even without their consent. The obligations facing documentary filmmakers

when it comes to filming members of the public (including minors) without explicit consent are based on the presuppositions that they are in a public place, that they do not become key characters in the film, and that filming does not infringe their expectation of privacy. All of these conditions are satisfied by attending a demonstration in a public place. However, I considered it good ethical practice to be proactive in reassuring and explaining my presence and respecting requests to desist from filming. As an aside, it is easy to check out the identities of filmmakers with any level of public profile so for this reason alone it is always important never to lie, which is not only ethically problematic but ineffective in today's social media-saturated world. Observational filmmaking is inevitably an embodied performance, in terms of effecting the action that is captured, in terms of deciding what action to capture, in terms of negotiating responses to the presence of the filmmaker.

c Heritage and Filmic embodied practices: Melilla

The heritage dimension in *MELILLA* is that the setting itself, the exclave of Melilla, can be understood as a heritage setting. As stated in the film in the form of false subtitles, Melilla is located on the north coast of Africa; it shares a border with Morocco and has been part of Spain since it was conquered over 500 years ago. And it is on this heritage-rich territory that these poor Moroccans come, seeking an escape route to mainland Europe. In this film, I had the assistance of key gatekeepers from an NGO⁶ and local activists⁷ who took me along with them to soup kitchens to meet the young migrants. I got there early and stayed until all the volunteers had gone. I mingled with the groups of boys and young men that would gather at the port for the welcome meal, allowing them to speak to the camera if they wanted. After a couple of shooting sessions like this, I felt confident about accompanying the migrants elsewhere. I sought the migrants out during the day and spent time with them as they roamed the city, always on the move to avoid harassment from the police and locals, before attempting what they called 'Riski' – the boarding of cruise ships heading for Malaga in the Spanish mainland. They took me back to the derelict buildings where they showed me their makeshift 'home'. I allowed them to use my mobile phone to connect to Facebook and send messages home. Many asked to connect with me on Facebook too, and we have been able to keep in contact since. I have got to know more about their life in Morocco, to which most of them end up returning after a few months on the streets of Melilla.

These young men are precisely the 'type' of migrants that the two German nationalists, featured in Act 3 *TOMPA*, fear and oppose – young Islamic migrants from Africa coming to Europe in search of a better life. They are also the migrants who are demonised and dehumanised in the mainstream media, in anti-migrant political party campaign materials, or feature as a statistic of those who perish trying to cross seas and jump borders (Johnson and Jones 2018). They are spoken 'about' and talked over with little space given for real dialogue between 'them' and us 'Europeans' (Arcimaviciene and Hamza Baglama, 2018).

I felt comfortable, obligated even, to find a way to gain their trust, which meant first of all that I had to demonstrate that I trusted them. It felt an appropriate way in which I could acknowledge and address the inherent power relations between me as a professional white male European and them as penniless migrant Muslim men and boys. Nichols muses on the nature of power relations between filmmaker and vulnerable subjects, which resonates here:

The difference in the power of filmmakers and their subjects can often be best measured by their relative access to the means of representation. Do subjects have the means to represent themselves? Do they have alternative access to the media apart from that provided by a given filmmaker? To the extent the answer is 'no,' the filmmaker's ethical obligation to avoid misrepresentation, exploitation and abuse rises correspondingly. Subjects who are dependent on the filmmaker to have their story told ...are most vulnerable to misrepresentation and abuse.

(Nichols, undated)

I was warned of the dangers of getting too close, of raising expectations that I could help the migrants get into Europe. Indeed, early on, one of the young men asked me to help his passage into Europe, which I addressed head-on to say that I was there only to make a film, but the only other request I have received from the boys and young men is to see footage of themselves. I was advised to be careful by the gatekeepers as they could not guarantee my safety or the safekeeping of my equipment. The boys were desperate in every way. I was certainly expecting to be asked for money to buy food or second-hand clothes, but it only happened a few times and I had already decided to always give ten euro if asked.

On one occasion a teenage boy told me he would scale the 4- to 5-metre-high fence into the port, the route they all took to try and board the ships, if I paid him 20 euro. To his immense irritation I refused to engage in a discussion with him about this. However, my credibility with the migrants and volunteers was enhanced by my refusal to be intimidated by the border guards. I was prevented from filming and questioned by civil guards on two occasions, both late into the night when I was left with just a couple of volunteers and a few remaining migrants after the soup kitchen had finished. A local lawyer advised me that while the threat was not idle, it was designed more to intimidate and discourage outsiders (filmmakers, journalists, lawyers, activists) giving exposure to the conditions of the boys and young men.

Implicit in the experiential commentary on the making of *WHO IS EUROPE?* offered here is a claim about the value that a certain type of film practice can make to a certain type of academic research project. I am not thinking here of how film can make research more accessible to a broader audience, which it does, but more in terms of complementarity of film-based research with conventional scholarship. Through its particular methodological and epistemological logic, filmic work can widen scopes of research questions, deepen possibilities for emotional engagement, open up new avenues of enquiry – in short it can

produce new ways of seeing and feeling – which can enrich the quality of research and increase the understanding and knowledge of ‘things’. It can also prompt and provoke the researchers themselves to reflect on the status, limitations and particularity of their own methods and findings.

3 The Editors’ comment

In DRESDEN, the split-screen makes palpable the clash of opposites circulating in heritage practices in present-day Germany. Using an observational style, McDonald captures the attempts by right-wing German nationalists to instrumentalise the annual commemoration of the Firebombing of Dresden in 1945 to seek legitimacy for a stridently nationalist German identity in 2018. However, the nationalist attempts to use the bombing attack by British and American forces in 1945 to carve out a right-wing anti-immigrant German identity today does not go unchallenged by the youth of Dresden – be they anti-fascist activists demonstrating on the streets or schoolgirls dancing in the city square!

McDonald throws the viewer into the midst of conflicting scenes of protest, counter-protest and commemoration on a cold February day in Dresden – the sombre, apparently ‘respectful’ procession of political figures laying wreaths at the *Heidefriedhof* memorial to the victims of the bombing of 13 February 1945; the angry, forceful voices and faces of the mainly older, rather worn-out looking PEGIDA and AfD demonstrators; the bystanders on the street – families, some not only wearing headscarves, but also expressions of shock and perhaps a little fear; the young girls dancing to Korean pop music in front of a statue of Martin Luther, who have placed themselves on the route of the AfD-PEGIDA march as a counterpoint and in order to show their allegiance to values of diversity and inclusion.⁸ What are we, the viewers, to make of this? How do we disentangle the confusion of who is doing what and why? These are the challenges of making sense of the multiple and often conflicting ways in which the past may be used and re-used in the present, how memories are enacted or mobilised to serve different political agendas. For McDonald this challenge was not only one of how to make visual sense of a series of events for the viewer, but also of untangling the situation and people’s different political allegiances and motivations in a place and in a language with which he was not familiar. Accompanying one of the editors of this book during her fieldwork in Dresden to analyse the commemorations of and protests around the February 1945 firebombing (also analysed in Eckersley 2019) provided McDonald with the opportunity to get to grips with the intertwined practices, processes and sites of heritage, memory, identity and politics which constitute Critical Heritage Studies.

The tense atmosphere in the city during the days surrounding the 13 February, with numerous commemorative activities organised by competing and conflicting groups – whether the city, university and religious officials, far-right and populist groups, left-wing activists, cultural organisations or citizens’



Figure 9.1 Screenshot from *Who is Europe: DRESDEN*

initiatives – is almost tangible in this act of the film. We can see and hear it, we feel the emotionality of the different protestors' positions in relation not only to Dresden's past, but also to the contemporary politics of migration and belonging in Europe. While the contested commemorations of the firebombing of 13 February 1945 have long been the focus of academic analyses as a phenomenon which has continued to evolve alongside the changing political and social circumstances of Dresden over the last 70 years (Niven 2006, Fuchs 2012, Joel 2013), the act highlights the contemporary concerns of people in the city today. Two 'respectable-looking' middle-aged women taking part in the AfD 'commemoration' in the evening of 13 February talk of their fears for the city, their sense of 'alienation at home' in light of changing demographics. Contrast them with the young girls dancing from the start of the film, whose powerful combination of insight and innocence comes out in their anger and frustration at a politics they cannot (yet) influence themselves. The multiple, opposing perspectives from across the full political spectrum which we encounter in the film – whether people are laying wreaths, holding hands, attacking or defending their spaces of protest, or lighting candles – are reactions not only to a past which is unresolved, but also to a sense of no longer belonging in the present, of rising fear for the future. McDonald gives us a visceral sense of how the politics of the AfD, populists and the far-right tap into growing feelings of alienation, frustration and uncertainty among the citizens of the city to enact a 'politics of fear' (Wodak 2015) in the guise of 'respectful' commemoration and public mourning.

In BOLOGNA, the split-screen works as a structural and narrative device to prompt questions about the complex nature of the politics of food heritage and identity in the northern Italian city of Bologna. The ambivalent relationship between tradition and modernity in the Italian food industry is brought to the fore as we accompany pasta fresco makers Graziano and Graziela on a journey from their small restaurant in the centre of Bologna to the outskirts of the city and the site of the latest FICO Eataly World store, dubbed by the media as the 'Disney world of food'.

Act 2, *BOLOGNA*, documents a telling encounter between different experiences and uses of tradition, encapsulated in the visit of the city-centre traditional pasta makers to the out-of-town Fico Eataly, billed as the ‘largest food park in the world’.⁹ It is an immense complex, and constitutes a new kind of heritage site that literally trades on Italy’s status as a centre of food heritage, supported by a developed process of heritagisation, through museums such as Casa Artusi and the inscription of elements within the Representative List of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity – the Mediterranean Diet (2013), the *Vite al alberello di Pantelleria* (2014), and the art of Neapolitan *Pizzaiuolo* (2017). Italian food has – arguably – become one of Europe’s ‘stock’ or archetypal heritages. An interconnected market for foodstuffs and phenomena, ‘slow food’, nostalgic interest in *cucina povera*, and forms of tourism such as *agriturismo* are considerable assets within the Italian economy. But within this economic heritage frame, food practices and products are often subject to industrialisation that may seem inimical to their ‘traditional’, small-scale and artisanal character.

The Fico Eataly World website invites us to experience all the wonders of Italian biodiversity in one place, to ‘get lost in the colors, aromas, and taste of Italy’s past, present, and future’. Museum-style displays, tours, events and courses co-exist with food shops and eating areas. Not-so-subtle appeals are made to authenticity, typicality and food heritages, but the acute insider questioning (and some telling facial expressions) from the visitor group, whom McDonald takes on a trip to the food park, often reveals problematics around commercial and regulatory issues like industrial and machine production, the kinds of ingredients used (pasteurised vs non-pasteurised eggs etc.) and the scale of operations. Change is afoot, and although there is a reliance on the heritage marker of the ‘artisanal’ in marketing, the meanings of this change invisibly but profoundly in this new dimension where the regulatory and market logics of big business obtain.

The apparently mundane details and differences noted by the pasta makers open up critical questions about change and continuity, heritage practice, marketing, cultural tourism, economies, uses of the past and identities. It is in the micro-politics of the visit that we see a refraction of the shifting place and significance of food traditions, and contrasting but ambiguous relationships that the different actors have to the past. The act is in marked contrast to others in the



Figure 9.2 Screenshot from Who is Europe: *BOLOGNA*

film, where ostensibly higher-profile issues are tackled (e.g. the Dresden commemorations), but it is in such contrasts that we see the different ways in which the past circulates in the present so pervasively and – even at this banal level – so fractiously. The film represents one of Eriksen’s ‘clash of scales’ explored elsewhere in this book as part of the tense making of heritage realities, for the local ‘cognitive’ scale is both appropriated and traduced by the ‘higher-scale’ dimension of markets, profits and efficiency proper to a globalised economy. This is simultaneously Italian and European heritage in terms of its markings, labellings and rhetorical reliances; but it is recast within a dimension of global capital that is a kind of silent partner.

It is notable that the traditional pasta makers had never been to the food park; their visit was effectively orchestrated by the filmmaker. This clash of scales – or this transgression of edges between what we might romantically call ‘authentic’, lived heritage and the commercialised machination of the foodpark – is one that crystallises *only* in certain circumstances of encounter. At other times, although the encounter crosses a significant social fault line, the different meanings, desires and worlds of what is ostensibly the same ‘heritage’ co-exist more or less invisibly; mismatch creeps in to take some people unawares and before we know it, the past has been remade, claimed and bent to new purpose in ways that traduce and transform everyday heritage into assets for the savvy.

In TOMPA, McDonald is drawn to a small border-town as a base to visit and film the barrier-border erected by the Hungarian Government to stem the flow of migrants entering from Serbia into Hungary as a gateway to western Europe. Evocative visuals of this desolate place and encounters with the Hungarian border-guards are set alongside testimonies from two of the increasing number of German citizens who are choosing to migrate to Hungary in the wake of the refugee crisis and its perceived impact on German society.

In the footage from Tompa, the filmmaker actively seeks out the edges of Europe – understood here as the European Union – and the powerful policing of an imagined European purity that goes on in these borderlands. The film’s focal point is the imposing border barrier erected on decision from Hungarian prime minister Viktor Orbán in the wake of the refugee crisis from 2015 onwards. As such, this act of the film – like the act from *Melilla* – works as a grim but highly relevant audiovisual commentary to the discussions in this volume’s Chapters 4 and 6 especially. More generally, it demonstrates the general idea of what we may call *heritage policing* and an understanding of (European) heritage measures as practices of defence and protection; heritage as bulwark against the marauding other. In such a view, as pointed out by Lowenthal (1994, p. 47), heritage ‘*distinguishes* us from others; it gets passed only to descendants, to our own flesh and blood; newcomers, outsiders, foreigners all erode and debase it’ (original emphasis). The film throws us back to Orbán’s referendum speech, quoted in our introduction to this book, in which he stated that if ‘we’ do not



Figure 9.3 Screenshot from Who is Europe: TOMPA

protect our European values, we end up like the ‘live frog allowing itself to be slowly cooked to death in a pan of water’.

Interspersed with McDonald’s brave attempts, in the grey and foggy landscape, to obtain allowance to film the brooding fence separating Hungary from Serbia – almost comic at times, as he negotiates access and distance with confused border guards – we meet two German self-proclaimed patriots who have enrolled, whole-heartedly, in Orbán’s project. One of these white men opens the act by stating that, ‘I live here in exile. I am a migrant who fled from Germany,’ in a disturbing twist of terminology, almost a conceptual mockery given the grave realities of the many actual African refugees seeking North in the face of war and chaos in their homelands. He is quite serious, though, insisting that his home country, Germany, ‘is dead’, ‘doesn’t exist anymore’, and that ‘intelligent people, who can afford it, go to Hungary’. This is so, he explains, because of the law and order imposed by Orbán in contrast to the way in which the German ‘dictatorship’ [*Diktaturregierung*] allows African ‘criminals’ to roam.

In the racist ‘Europe’ occupied by these men, the European heritage is understood to be white only and protected by strong men and tall fences. They do not seem to find it necessary to argue for the (white) entitlement they feel, as foreigners in Hungary, to tell off other foreigners – precisely because of these other foreigners’ perceived otherness. The distinctions are sharp and orderly; and in this realm of ‘purity and danger’, these darker others are evidently conceived of as ‘matter out of place’, to borrow Mary Douglas’ (1966) apt term from her structuralist analysis of cultural ideas of pollution and taboo. As the other ‘exiled’ German nationalist explains on camera, Europe itself is pure and harmonious. ‘We in Europe have a great and beautiful culture. We have beautiful language. We are colourful.’ This last comment is juxtaposed, wonderfully, in the film footage, with images of the cold, grey and muddy outskirts of the Hungarian-Serbian borderlands.

While these are clearly extremist views, as an audience member one cannot help but speculate how deep-seated they are and to what extent they represent broader currents. Clearly, they are prevalent, even dominant, in particular areas and specific population segments across Europe; they obviously point back, as well, to the *DRESDEN* act of McDonald’s film and the German PEGIDA

movement (and parallel groups in other countries). Apart from demonstrating a deeply problematic idea of white European heritage and entitlement, one may also note that in a larger perspective, this recent political enthusiasm with walls, fence-making and the violent policing of parameters also reminds us of earlier European legacies of walls and concrete separation – think of Hadrian’s wall, Hitler’s Atlantic Wall or the Iron Curtain of the Cold War period – and of the historical ebbs and flows of restriction on movement. This wall-making is also an important European heritage, and a stark reminder of the continent’s past of divisions and violence. Today, it seems, such divisionary activities cannot be relegated to the ‘foreign country’ of the past, to once more cite Lowenthal (1985). Walls are springing up again, and so are scenarios and identity templates referencing ‘the enemy at the gate’, whether pointing towards Constantinople in 1453, Vienna in 1683, or other mythical pasts and ideas of conquest. In Tompa, the border and the fence is real and full of consequence.

In BODRUM, a popular tourist resort on Turkey’s Anatolian south-west coast, a controversial plan is underway to construct a 50-metre-high glass reconstruction of the Mausoleum at Halicarnassus, ranked as one of the Seven Wonders of the Ancient World. In this film, we visit the archaeological site with the ruins of the huge tomb of Mausollos, the Persian satrap of Karia, and his sister (and wife) Artemis. We listen to conflicting opinions from architects, archaeologists and local people about the ambitious and audacious ‘glass-project’. At stake in this debate about Bodrum’s heritage and its relationship to civic pride and, of course, the business of tourism. Alongside these testy issues, opinions about the plans show up contests about the ownership of the Mausoleum and whether it is an expression of Hellenic and European, or Anatolian (‘Karian’), civilization.

Act 4, *BODRUM*, is an assembly of voices – selected and interviewed by one of the current editors (Bozoğlu). These voices speak differently about and with the geohistorical and geocultural situation of ancient heritage Anatolian Turkey. The fourth-century BCE Mausoleum is a negative space of heritage now, and in some ways constitutes a screen onto which actors project desires that connect to senses of self-in-history. Now, as one interviewee puts it, there are ‘just a few stones’. The remaining masonry was periodically appropriated for other buildings. In the nineteenth century, the archaeologist and curator Charles Thomas Newton excavated the site, removing some of the most important figure sculptures to London, where they are still to be found at the British Museum. As Funder, Kristensen and Nørskov (2019) show at length, the missing Mausoleum has been subject to multiple remodellings, first through reconstructive models by archaeologists such as the one by Kristian Jepessen, but also through its reprisal in numerous borrowings in western neoclassical architecture that rely on and reproduce a canon of antiquity. In one reading, the mausoleum is indelibly associated with a canon of European heritage because of its iconic architecture and its role as object of the classical, archaeological and historical European gaze. (Bodrum



Figure 9.4 Screenshot from Who is Europe: *BODRUM*

too, for this was the birthplace of Herodotus, often perceived as the first historian and, incidentally, the first to recount the story of Europa...) Europe emerges in other ways: the castle made from the Mausoleum stones was a Crusader outpost with ‘English, French, German, and Italian towers’ (Wikipedia calls the castle’s construction a ‘transnational effort’!¹⁰), although it was later taken over by the Islamic Ottoman Empire in 1523, its chapel converted to a mosque and a minaret added.

To whom or to what does the missing heritage of the mausoleum belong? It aligns poorly with the dominant origin stories connected to Turkish notions of self-in-history, whether that is the story of Turkic migration from the Asian Steppes, the Kemalist interest in the Hittites as Turks, or the current government’s insistence on Ottoman heritage. As Hellenic antiquity, the mausoleum might seem to fit within an alternative national frame – that of Greece – but this is yet another argument about mismatches between contemporary place and historical culture: a clash between geopolitics and geohistory. Technically the mausoleum predates any nation-state, even if in some national imaginations this is not the case (as when Turkey’s ambassador to Uganda, Sedef Yavuzalp, dressed as Helen of Troy on Republic Day in 2018). Is the Mausoleum ‘European’, although it was sited on what is now Asian soil? Or are other imagined connections possible between this deep past and the present?

These questions are bound up in new debates about whether, and how, to reconstruct the Mausoleum – what to do with the void space. This is especially pressing at the time of writing, when a tourism downturn resulting from fear of terrorism in Turkey is set to ameliorate, and civic actors are poised to make good on the economic returns to come. So, the logics of economic development come strongly into play: heritage, tourism, hotels, wider benefits to all. Archaeologists and architects may disagree strongly about what should be done, but their interests coalesce in pronouncing the importance of the monument both globally and locally. One archaeologist is careful to point out that the features of the site are expressly ‘Karian’ – pertaining to the ancient civilisation in Anatolia – which has a local meaning that cannot be subsumed by or scaled up to a more general ‘Hellenic’ form. This is not just about classifying the characteristics of the site. Rather, it is about organising history and identity relationally, claiming distinction and making

a self-in-history that evades a national or European frame in favour of another, deeper form of collectivity. The journalist interviewed at the beginning of the Act expresses what a 2000-year-old (absent) monument can mean to people. He himself identifies as ‘Karian’, and calls Mausollos his ‘fellow townsman’ (*hemşehri*). Such rhetorical acts collapse historical and temporal discontinuities and connect over the millennia, as if in an a-temporal imaginary the two men could bump into one another in the street, and have a world of things in common.

But the footage shows that the reconstruction of the mausoleum is an elite matter in which local communities are not involved. We are seeing the playing-out of a set of authorised heritage discourses, however contradictory, co-produced by powerful actors. Some of them, in interviews but off camera, were perplexed to hear that we were also interviewing non-experts and were disparaging of local community perspectives (‘they don’t know anything’). One elite respondent even tried to exert control over whom we interviewed, as if to control the narrative, but also to maintain the AHD. As it happens, people live alongside the void of the mausoleum. It means something to them. One old couple have the first archaeological trench – dating from a 1960s excavation – in their garden. They *live* with a heritage – whether European, Asian, Greek, Turkish, Anatolian or Karian – whose public meanings are determined by others.

In MELILLA, one of two Spanish cities situated in mainland coastal Africa, hundreds of migrant young men and boys from neighbouring Morocco, known as ‘Harragas’, risk their lives trying to illegally board ships bound for mainland Spain. In this city known for its rich heritage, McDonald spends time with these young homeless migrants and allows them to use his camera and his mobile phone to communicate with home and vent rage against their suffering. In a reflexive attempt to redress the power imbalance inherent in ‘dialogues’ about young Muslim men migrating from Africa to Europe, McDonald insists that they, the ignored and demonized youth, talk, and we, the privileged viewers, listen.

In Act 5, *MELILLA*, we are compelled to ask some seemingly obvious questions: why is there a Spanish city in the mainland of the African continent? Why can a Spanish man walking through the streets upbraid the young African men with whom McDonald spends time? Where is Europe?

One answer comes from some AHD. Towards the end of the Act, McDonald intersperses text from the tourist marketing of the city with the visuals of the excited young men who congregate at the port. The marketing material states simply that ‘Melilla was conquered by Spain over 500 years ago.’ Indeed, we then learn that Melilla has many of the trappings of a European city, as well as being part of a key European story of twentieth-century dictatorships and their overthrow:

Noted for its 15th-century military fortress and its beautiful art nouveau and modernist architecture, Melilla is rich in Spanish Colonial heritage. In the

Spanish Civil War from 1936 to 1939, Melilla was the first town to rise against the Popular Front government, the last public statue of General Franco in Spain is in Melilla.

Lastly, we read that, ‘In 2016, Melilla was named a European City of Sport.’¹¹ Indeed it was, as a *Spanish* city – a double imprimatur that explicitly Europeanises this urban centre on the coast of Africa. Its football team plays in the Spanish leagues. (But when there is a derby match with the nearby Spanish exclave of Ceuta, the visiting team travel via the Spanish mainland to avoid entering Morocco.) One could argue here that the award of a ‘European City of...’ title is a form of cultural *re-colonising*, as if that were necessary to allay doubts about just how European this curious edge place really is. But this time the colonising is done with a policy instrument that transfers – or rather imposes – the symbolic capital of Europeanness.

Indeed, at the surface level of the visible appearance of the city, with its joggers, coastal promenades and the prestigious modernist architecture, it can be difficult for us as lay viewers to ‘locate’ this city in the cultural geographies in our minds. Unless we know that this city is an exclave (which few non-Spaniards or non-Moroccans do) then it is easy to think that we are watching a continental-European city ‘besieged’ by foreign migrants, reproducing a stock trope of far-right propaganda. The film might seem, at first take, to have the potential to validate all of the worst sentiments of those in Europe who trade politically on fomenting fear. That is, those who present refugees and illegal migrants as non-European others who do not belong – who take from ‘us’ (just as the angry Spaniard says in the footage) – so that cultural and physical borders need to be made and remade lest our worlds topple into a free-for-all. That is one of the risks of making subtle films out of split-screen juxtapositions, without expert voiceover to make meaning for viewers.

But once we know where Melilla is, a concatenating set of profound historical and political questions suggest themselves. The city is in fact disputed territory, claimed by Morocco (whose EU candidature, we recall, was refused on ‘geographical criteria’ – see Chapter 5 this volume) and tenaciously held onto by Spain. Indeed, the city has been a key trading post and a font of mineral resources, much as with the ‘Spanish Sahara’ restored to Morocco and Mauritania after the Green



Figure 9.5 Screenshot from Who is Europe: *MELLILA*

March of 1975 in return for fishing and mining rights. Although the tourist marketing makes much of the rich ‘Colonial heritage’ of Melilla, this is actually a wrong note from the Spanish perspective, which claims that Melilla and Ceuta were never colonies, since they have been under Spanish rule for as long as, or longer than, many mainland Spanish cities taken in the ‘*Reconquista*’. In 2007 King Juan Carlos I and Queen Sofia visited the city, a move that the indignant Mohammed VI of Morocco called a ‘nostalgic act of a gloomy and surpassed era’ that ‘attacks the patriotic feelings firmly rooted among all the components and sensitivities of the Moroccan people’.¹² Prior to the fractious entanglement of Morocco and Spain, Melilla was the site of multiple civilisations and cultures: Berber, Roman, Vandal, Byzantine, Visigoth, Umayyad among the many, before Ferdinand and Isabella ordered the conquest of 1497.

In short, Melilla has long been a liminal space of crossings and contests; it is another case of tension between geohistory and geopolitics, with sovereignty claims from nation-states clashing with a more complex pre-national past. But now, all of this has slowly hardened into the walls that the *Harragas* transgress, and into the laws and international compacts that they break. They cannot make their own destinies easily. As one young man says: ‘if reality was like a painting I would’ve been the painter, then I would paint into the blank outline of my body’. Another seems to suggest that there is no essential difference between him and Juan Carlos I. Yet they cannot legally go to Europe. But the historical contingency of this and the fundamental inequality of it – if Melilla, on African soil, is counted as a ‘European’ city – should make us question what Europe is, how it has come to be, and consequently, what are our places in the world; what are our pasts, positions and rights to presence?

WHO IS EUROPE? concludes with images and sounds of bells ringing out in Cologne, Riga, Warsaw and Northumberland in *RINGING FOR PEACE*. The UN-backed International Peace Day (IPD) is marked throughout Europe by a call for churches, city halls, belfries and memorials to ring their bells ‘for solidarity and peace’ and a celebration of ‘shared cultural heritage in Europe’. Coming after five acts that in different ways explore how heritage practices are often mobilised in support of antagonism and exclusion as much as peace and inclusion, this initiative leaves us with a key provocation of this 62-minute film, ‘Who is Europe?’

RINGING FOR PEACE is another Act of the film that returns us to the textual ‘split-screen’ that is a framing device for this book. As we learned in Chapter 1, 2018 was European Year of Cultural Heritage, involving a year-long, international programme of events. On 21 September, this European-level initiative was knotted together with IPD, established by United Nations (UN) resolution in 1981 in order to ‘strengthen the ideals of peace, both within and among all nations and peoples...’ The call to sound the bells of Europe was answered by a multitude: ‘from the Town Hall in the 2017 European Capital of Culture, Aarhus (Denmark) to the Emperor William Memorial Church in Berlin (Germany) and the Micalet’s Tower of Valencia’s Cathedral (Campaners de la Catedral de València) (Spain)’.¹³



Figure 9.6 Screenshot from Who is Europe: *RINGING FOR PEACE*

At the UN level, the 2018 Peace Day had little to do with bells. It was discursively bound up with the celebration of the seventieth anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights adopted by the United Nations General Assembly in Paris in 1948. As UN Secretary-General António Guterres remarked of IPD 2018, ‘It is time all nations and all people live up to the words of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, which recognizes the inherent dignity and equal and inalienable rights of all members of the human race.’¹⁴ (This – if we think of the refugee family who look curiously at the golfers half way through the Act, is just one of the dissonances that emerges to suggest that rights are not held equally by all.) Another UN investment in promoting IPD at this moment was connected to the recently-established Sustainable Development Goals of 2015, which represent a global international accord to tackle the world’s most critical and grievous problems, including the need to create ‘peaceful and inclusive societies’.

However, at the European level, a different frame of references organises activity for IPD in relation to a specifically European dimension. We can recall how Krzysztof Pomian’s sensory survey of Europe identified the ringing of bells as a proper feature of its culture (see Chapter 2, this volume), and we hear echoes of this in the EYCH framing:

In Europe, for more than a thousand years the ringing of bells has marked the time for work, for rest and for prayer. Ringing bells gave an audible structure to religious and secular life. Even today, millions of bells can be heard daily all across Europe. Bells in the towers of churches and city halls, in the belfries of cemeteries and memorial sites uniquely represent core European values in a way which can be both seen and heard.

Many Europeans love the sound of bells, music without words brought forth from a centuries-old craft tradition.

Of course, at first sight this seems to align with a Christianized view of European culture that is problematic in the multicultural present, as much as it is a misleading account of the multicultural past in some quarters of Europe. We

recall here the transformation of minarets into bell towers in Al-Andalus, as discussed in Chapter 5. We can also think about the brooding, zealous menace of the cross-wielding statuary figures in the film (on the rooftops of Dresden Cathedral), perhaps connoting less benign histories of Christianity in Europe.

But the EYCH organisers were alive to such risks, and pointed out that the ‘sound [of bells in Europe] has existed for five millennia, going back well before the founding of Christianity’, and that the ringing of bells is multivalent and intercultural:

Whether cathedral bells, Buddhist temple bells, Shinto shrine bells – all convey a sense of ceremony, the passage of time and transcendence beyond the bounds of language. This is culture in the broadest sense, bringing together daily life (a clock chiming the hours), a call for peace (peace bells in Hiroshima and Berlin), politics (bell of state in Notre Dame de Paris), custom (tolling of bells on All Souls’ Day), art (carillon music), collective cultural memory (bells tolling for the 50th anniversary of the building of the Berlin Wall), and religion (invitation to church services and marking of important moments in the liturgy).

This careful mapping of human culture, of sonic marking, calling, contemplating, remembering, seems to represent a universal dimension of experience and desire, an appetite for a Durkheimian collective effervescence that binds society to itself (Durkheim, 1912). Indeed, the general values of ‘solidarity and peace’ were linked to an extroverted insistence on the locale of Europe and its cultural ‘offer’ towards the global – an insistence, that is, on ‘our cultural heritage in Europe *and for* the world’ (our emphasis). Then, in the EYCH framing of the bell-ringing event, come the memory culture references, in the confluence of significant anniversaries:

In 2018, we remember the end of World War I a century ago, the start of the Thirty Years’ War in 1618 and its end in 1648, in order not to forget how precious peace is for us all.

Are these simply convenient dates? Or containers of values and implicit supports to naturalise a status quo comprised of plural and neighbourly national orders? World War One, as has been amply demonstrated (Erll, 2008, p. 7), can be remembered in many ways and imbued with multiple meanings. The poppy worn by millions of British people every year in November has the archetypal ‘necessary ambiguity’ (Guibernau, 2013) of a symbol that signifies plurally: for some, the sacrifice of the working class, for others, a proud victory over the Central Powers, for others again, the fellowship of enemies on Christmas Day. And so on. The meanings of 1648 are, we might venture, hardly well-known at a general level, nor its significance for our self-organisation in the present. The Sites of the Peace of Westphalia have earned the European Heritage Label for their association with international law and relations, sovereignty, the making of

peace through diplomacy and religious tolerance.¹⁵ It was not the only instance of compounding European heritage totems within the bell-ringing event: at the Peace Palace in the Hague (another EHL site) the carillionist Mrs Van der Weel completed the ‘#Ode2Joy’ challenge to reinterpret the ‘Anthem of Europe’ adopted from Beethoven’s Ninth Symphony, supported by Europa Nostra and its President, the opera singer Plácido Domingo.¹⁶

In the global- and European-level investments into IPD we see complex and contrasting temporalities and desires. For the UN, this is predominantly future-oriented, pertaining to development goals with an end date (of 2030). This orientation rests lightly on the historical referent of the historic Human Rights Declaration of 1948. For EYCH, a more a complex set of historical investments is at work, and the gaze is only lightly turned forwards. In the subtle accommodations of permissible dissonance between anniversaries and scales we see the gentle politics of downsizing from global to European. But what happens when we downsize again, and then again? And what if the subtle interplay of heritage meanings goes generally unnoticed? Beyond all the politics, isn’t it just good to ring bells?

As it happened, the footage for RINGING FOR PEACE was largely crowd-sourced through networks and social media. (Unfortunately, this meant that some of it was unusable because of quality issues.) We received footage from many quarters of Europe, not all of bell-ringing: from Italy the National Association of Italy’s Partisans preferred to send us footage of their rendition of the anti-fascist anthem *Bella Ciao*, with which they had marked IPD.

We could not find anywhere in the UK to film the ringing of bells. The Conservative administration paid no heed to IPD, and when we rang officers at the nearby Newcastle Cathedral they knew nothing about it, nor about EYCH. (Of course, Brexit meant that 2018 was in some ways a tricky year to be celebrating ‘European heritage’ in the UK, and there was also a singularly *national* investment to commemorate 1918.) The cathedral representatives were willing to help, but their bell-ringers were away, unaware of any of this. But then we received a message from the UK EYCH co-ordinator, a protagonist of European heritage, who also happened to be warden of his tiny local church in the village of Thockrington, in the rural far north of England. The film captures him, ringing the single church bell, with only the moorland sheep for an audience.

In our next and final chapter, we (the editors of this volume) take up the question implied here: what forms of collectivity obtain? What is the real possibility of a transnational European heritage demos? If the collectivising power of initiatives such as Ringing for Peace should fall short, then what is it that can bind us to one another in times of crisis?

Notes

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- 2 <https://vimeo.com/301107016>.
- 3 <https://research.ncl.ac.uk/cohere/researchstrands/>.
- 4 I would like to acknowledge here that Act 4 *BODRUM* was made by my colleague and one of the editors of this book, Dr Gönül Bozoğlu, together with Turkish filmmaker Cem Hakverdi. I assisted by finalising the edit.
- 5 Tommy Robinson, whose real name is Steven Christopher Yaxley-Lennon, is a prominent far-right activist from England.
- 6 Harraga Association www.facebook.com/harragamelilla/.
- 7 Asociación Pro.De.In. Melilla <http://melillafronterasur.blogspot.com>.
- 8 Having encountered the girls dancing in a different location – close to the main station, directly opposite the well-publicised gathering point of the AfD/PEGIDA march shortly before it was due to begin – and observed their interactions with the police, their intentions were evident to me, although they may not be so clear to viewers of the film.
- 9 www.eatalyworld.it/en/.
- 10 https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Bodrum_Castle.
- 11 The non-profit organisation ACES Europe awards the European Capital of Sport title. Its website and candidature make clear its support from the EU and its adherence to EU principles and the ‘European dimension’ of sport, drawn in particular from the 2007 White Paper on Sport that promotes ‘dynamic union and cooperation factor[s] able to promote peace and solidarity among nations. [Sport] contributes to health, social integration and inclusion, takes part to the non-formal education process, supports inter-cultural exchanges and creates jobs within the European Union’. (aceseurope.eu/about/).
- 12 https://elpais.com/elpais/2007/11/06/actualidad/1194340617_850215.html.
- 13 www.europanostra.org/ringing-the-bells-for-peace-during-the-european-year-of-cultural-heritage-2018/.
- 14 www.un.org/en/events/peaceday/.
- 15 <https://ec.europa.eu/programmes/creative-europe/sites/creative-europe/files/library/ehl-2014-panel-report.pdf#page=9>.
- 16 www.europanostra.org/ode-joy-challenge/.

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