7

TRANSCULTURAL HERITAGE

Reconfiguring identities and the public sphere

> For our house is open, there are no keys in the doors, and invisible guests come in and out at will.
>
> Czesław Milosz[1]

Given that historically heritage has been entangled with attempts to forge and maintain bounded, homogeneous identities, especially of the nation-state, a major question is whether heritage is capable of accommodating other kinds of identities, especially those that might be considered, variously, 'hybrid', 'open' or 'transcultural'. This question has arisen especially in the face of recognition of heterogeneity within nations arising from immigration – from other parts of Europe and, especially, from outside. This has prompted further questions concerning whether it is possible to draw on memory and heritage to form new identity stories that include rather than exclude cultural diversity and 'mixed' culture. Is it possible to have a common heritage and a 'multi-heritage' simultaneously? Are some forms of past presencing more or less amenable to incorporation within a more 'inclusive' national identity? And can or will new identity formations and memories displace or be felt in the same ways as those that preceded them? These and similar questions arise too in relation to European identity and formation of a European public sphere, as noted in Chapter 1. Can and should a 'European heritage' be identified that transcends national and other diversities within Europe? Are there alternatives to replicating national-style models at another scale? In many ways, these questions probe at the very nature and significance of heritage, for they open up examination of the usually assumed consonance between past, people, location and culture, especially material culture, and draw attention to possible alternative ways of past presencing.

In this chapter I explore these questions primarily in relation to debates concerning migrant minorities within nation-states. Numerous projects and initiatives, including exhibitions, that variously address migrant identity and its relationship to memory and heritage, usually with a view to forging greater 'tolerance' and senses of 'inclusion', are currently underway in cities throughout Europe. As we will see, these may operate within the existing identity-heritage model and may even unwittingly confound the 'inclusion problem' that they set out to address. Others, however, seek to rework heritage to create new possibilities for affiliation. In the chapter I look at a range of forms of heritage but pay particular attention to tangible material heritage in public space, especially that of museums and monuments. I do so partly because these were such significant forms in the earlier formation of national identities and are distinctive assemblages – with their own particular 'shapes', possibilities and limits – that deserve attention in their own right. In addition, they are not just forms but are also persisting physical presences in – and even constitutors of – public space, and in the case of museums are often repositories of existing 'heritage' whose very existence can have implications for future configurations of the past. Furthermore, they have been and are sites of some significant experiments and contests concerning transcultural heritage in the new Europe.

Transcultural and other terms

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

Clearly, it is methodologically important to be able to perceive ways of forming values, organising lives and forging senses of belonging and so forth that do not map onto 'cultures' as they are often popularly talked about, which frequently means those of nationality or ethnicity. At the same time, however, this particular way of thinking about 'cultures' is widespread within Europe (as indeed elsewhere to varying extents) and, as such, is part of its lived reality, shaping events, contests and futures. It is an element in the European memory complex – a particular constellation of intermeshed ideas and practices – that also shapes the memory phenomenon. One of the difficulties that anthropologists

have faced when trying to avoid using the term 'cultures' is that of finding ways of still talking about differences encountered and the often recurrent patterns and congruences that may coalesce around what they would previously have more comfortably referred to as 'cultures'.

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

Also used to describe processes of cultural mixing and the new cultural forms that may emerge are terms such as 'syncretic'/'syncretism', 'creole'/'creolisation', 'fusion' and 'hybrid'/'hybridity'. Again, there has been criticism of their presupposition of pre-existing 'pure' or 'non-creolised' cultures and identities that exist prior to their mixing. The term 'hybridity' has been subject to particular critique for its biological origins, which some see as giving legitimacy to biologised understandings of race or find unsuitable given that 'hybrids' in biology are usually defined as sterile – as the end of a line. Others, however, seek to recuperate it as a term to describe mixing that transgresses established boundaries, producing challenging new forms in the process.[2] Here, I treat these terms as broadly synonymous with 'transcultural', and seek primarily to examine cultural initiatives and forms that set out to mix – to varying degrees – what are seen as 'cultures'.

In European public cultural policy and practice, the term that is in most widespread use is 'multicultural'. This has been widely adopted to describe and give recognition to the fact that many parts of Europe, especially its larger cities, are home to people who themselves, or whose parents or grandparents, came from other parts of the world and who may have various different cultural practices. Often used with the suffix 'ism', 'multiculturalism' describes a political position in which cultural differences are given recognition and allowed to flourish within the nation-state. The idea of multiculturalism has received significant criticism, as I will discuss further below. Even more strongly than 'transcultural', 'multicultural' contains a premise of distinct cultures – but unlike the former, 'multicultural' contains no suggestion that mixing is

possible but further confirms the notion of cultures as comparable to separate species, as Ghassan Hage suggests in his description of multiculturalism as 'zoological' (2000). Yet the political philosopher Charles Taylor (1992) points out that the idea of cultures (like individuals) as being distinct and in need of expressing their distinctiveness has, since the eighteenth century, evolved as the taken-for-granted way of being in modern societies; and that the politics of multiculturalism seek to create conditions in which this is permitted to all, or the majority of, self-identifying cultural groups rather than just to a single national identity.

'Transcultural' and 'transnational' are sometimes used more or less as substitutes for 'post-national'.[3] This is based in an idea that the national is declining in significance for people's identification in the face of increasing cultural mixing. Yet, as we will see below, in this chapter and more directly still in the next, transcultural developments do not necessarily lead to a fundamental unsettling of the national, and for this reason it is important not to conflate these terms. In recent discussion, 'cosmopolitan' and 'cosmopolitanism' have come to dominate discussion, and these too are often understood as challenges to nation-statist forms of identification, as I discuss further in the following chapter. In choosing to frame this chapter in terms of the transcultural, however, and the following in terms of the cosmopolitan, my intention is to look here particularly at developments that are articulated as a mixing and fusion of cultural forms, and in the following at developments that have been understood as oriented to more commonly human concerns, seeking to further escape anchorage of nation and location. This is not to say, however, that they either succeed or that there is not a good deal in common between them.

National identity, monuments and museums

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

The term 'monument', according to Andrew Butterfield,

> comes from the Latin noun *monumentum,* which is derived from the Latin verb *moneo*. The primary meaning of *moneo* is 'to bring to the notice of, to remind, or to tell of.' *Monumentum* consequently is something with this function, specifically something that stimulates the remembrance of a person or an event.
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> (Butterfield 2003: 28)[4]

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

The museum – whose modern publicly-open form only began at the same time as the nation-state – also acted as an agency and site for identifying worthy heritage, in effect, creating three-dimensional identity-stories for the public. It also helped make the very idea of singular, bounded national identities, with their own heritages and cultures, imaginable. This not only operated through the display of things produced by, or discovered within, the nation, though these generally took pride-of-place, but also, typically, through objects from many parts of the world. This was the case in national museums of many kinds, including the encyclopaedic (generalist) museum, as well as more subject-specific kinds of museums, such as those of natural history or art. In ethnographic museums it was usually *only* the stuff of others on display. In part, this display of objects from other parts of the world served to illuminate the nation's 'mastery' over a large geographical area, thus substantiating the nation as a significant international player.[5] In addition, however, the material culture from other places was usually displayed in a manner that exemplified – and substantiated through objects – the discrete diversity of peoples, thus making 'objective' a particular model of the world as largely divided into territorially and culturally distinct peoples.

Another important capacity of heritage, monuments and museums was to gather people – to attract people to come to them. Of course, not all succeeded in this as well as those involved in their making might have hoped. As Jonas Frykman writes, 'Monuments are a strange kind of material culture with lives of their own' (2004: 110) and much the same can be said of museums. But what monuments and museums nevertheless helped effect was the assembling of a public, an act that has been argued to be central to both forming the idea of a collectivity of citizens and to creating senses and accompanying affects of national belonging. In the case of monuments especially, this may operate in conjunction with rituals – affectively dense collective events that help individuals to feel connection with the nation or other demarcated collectivity. But even the looser, though orderly, gathering of people by museums could encourage a sense of having common interests and ambitions with those of other unknown visitors. This was also fostered by the museum's capacity to put the viewer into a privileged distanced relationship with the displays – as an objective spectator of 'an external object-world' (Mitchell 1988: 21) that Mitchell, drawing on Heidegger, describes as 'the world as exhibition'.[6] Capable visitors were, thus, envisaged as able to step outside of culture and view it with detachment, even while feeling strongly attached to their own. In doing so, they also became part of a self-aware collective of fellow citizens.

Given how much the form of monuments, and perhaps even more so of museums, was entangled in shaping a particular kind of identity, public and even certain notions of objectivity, perhaps they, and the heritage that they preserve, are too inextricably entangled in 'old' forms of identity and ways of seeing and feeling to be able to express 'new' ones. Are they too solid and static to express more fluid or volatile identities? If museum collections are in a sense the materialisations of memories as heritage linked to specific identities, then this also raises the question of whether museums and the heritage inevitably serve as 'brakes' or 'limits' on identity reconfiguration. Before exploring this in relation to some examples, we need to turn briefly to debates about how and why there might be – or need to be – changes in identity formations.

Identities, culture and heritage

The idea that existing identities and/or models of identity might be becoming obsolete or inadequate to contemporary realities has been widespread in social and cultural theory, especially since the 1990s.[7] Generally, the idea forms part of an argument about social and cultural transformations glossed by the label 'globalisation'. Put simply, the argument is that existing identifications and perhaps even the bounded, homogeneous model of identity itself are challenged by increased global movement – of people, goods, bads, symbols, ideas, images and so forth – enabled and even provoked by modern information and communication technologies, and also by the movement of people around the world, either temporarily through tourism and travel or more long-term through migration. In some theorisations, this contributes to greater identity-fluidity, as individuals are increasingly enabled or forced to sever themselves from the contexts of their birth; and in some it leads to increasingly fragmented or fusion identities as individuals selectively make themselves up in the changing and multiple worlds that they encounter – materially and virtually. Culture, in these perspectives, usually becomes less organically connected to particular groups of people – as it does in the identity-heritage complex that we have discussed in earlier chapters – but becomes instead more 'mixable' or 'hybrid', or even a set of symbols or lifestyle choices from which individuals make their own particular selections.

National identities have been a focus of much discussion of this sort, with some arguing that the multiple various allegiances of migrants and those whose parents or grandparents were migrants – who may, variously and depending on the particular national laws, become national citizens – challenges the idea of a nation-state as mono-cultural or populated by those who share a single heritage. National mono-culturalism has also been challenged by social history, pointing out the heterogeneity of heritage and expanding definitions of heritage, especially in class terms.[8] The expansion of the local, industrial and 'everyday' heritage discussed earlier is linked to this. Furthermore, ethno-nationalism – demands ranging from increased recognition to autonomy and separatisms by

self-claimed 'indigenous minorities' – has also been argued to be a return of difference previously suppressed or unacknowledged by existing nation-states. Examples in Europe include the Basques, Welsh, Catalans, Sami, and Bretons. Yet, while these show the existence and/or persistence of difference within nation-states, they do not challenge the national model fundamentally. On the contrary, as shown even more dramatically by the many ethnonationalist groups that have succeeded in gaining national sovereignty, as have those of the former Yugoslavia and Soviet Union, they are premised upon models of bounded nations with their own distinctive culture and heritage. As we saw in Chapter 2, European identity is also often modelled on that of the nation-state and so does not necessarily challenge the identity-heritage model itself.

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

Multiculturalism

Stolcke's discussion of the rise of culturally fundamentalist rhetoric, which she sees as motivated by existing European nations (and also Europe as a whole) asserting their own boundaries, rights and cultural exclusivity, can also be usefully considered in relation to policies of multiculturalism and subsequent developments. As she notes, governmental policy on cultural diversity varies markedly between European countries; in particular, she compares what she calls 'the French model', which aims at 'assimilation and civic incorporation'

and the 'Anglo-Saxon' one, which allows cultural diversity within a broad aim of ethnic integration (1995: 9). The latter has also formed a base for official policies of multiculturalism that not merely tolerate diversity but encourage the idea of the nation as constituted by a mosaic of different cultures.[9] On the one hand, this gives official recognition to cultural difference and grants a degree of cultural autonomy to the variously recognised 'cultures'. On the other, however, it is often argued that multicultural policies only recognise *some* elements of culture – usually an identikit of 'safe' cultural markers, such as dress and food, rather than potentially divisive differences of practice or difficult heritage.[10] Moreover, it can be said to be an extension of cultural fundamentalism itself, albeit usually without the territorial dimension, though the latter is sometimes realised through an idea of particular 'communities' or urban neighbourhoods. As such, multicultural fundamentalism also excludes more untidy or complex identity formations and memories.

Multicultural policies, enacted through a multitude of local practices, vary widely across and within European countries as ethnographic research has shown.[11] Such research has often highlighted contradictions of practice. In Berlin, for example, which as we saw in the Chapter 5 is increasingly being marketed as 'multicultural', Kira Kosnick argues that 'the management of its "really existing" ethno-cultural diversity' (2009: 162) often belies its ambitions. Her examples include those who look to be of immigrant backgrounds being turned away from using the toilets at the House of World Cultures – toilets that many others who are also just visiting the nearby park but are 'stereotypical embodiments of non-immigrant Germans' are permitted to use (2009: 161). In a study of a multicultural project to bring artists from Istanbul to Berlin, Banu Karaca describes them feeling frustrated to be 'put in the position of social workers' rather than artists, and to be treated as 'representatives of their supposed communities, and by extension "their cultures", rather than as individual artists' (2009: 35). Several told her they would avoid taking part in such projects in future.

There have also been many moments – some long – of 'backlash' against multicultural policies, including recent proclamations by the German Chancellor, Angela Merkel, and the British Prime Minister, David Cameron, that multiculturalism has failed.[12] Instances of unrest in areas of high proportions of the population with immigrant backgrounds – as in riots in Paris in 2007 and several summers since – have fuelled heated debate across many parts of Europe about which approaches hold most promise for generating senses of 'inclusion'. In some countries, most notably the Netherlands, which long held a reputation for being especially accommodating of difference, there has been a marked turn to attempting to reinstate senses of affiliation to the nation. Oskar Verkaik dates the questioning of multicultural approaches in the Netherlands to 2000, propelled partly by politicians such as Pim Fortuyn, who opposed further Muslim immigration into the Netherlands, arguing that Muslim refusal to recognise gay and women's rights threatened Dutch society, and its very liberalism. The assassination of Fortuyn in 2002, and then of film-maker

Theo van Gogh – who was also highly critical of Islam – further fuelled debate and the generation of what Verkaik calls 'the new nationalism'. Unlike earlier nationalisms, he suggests, this form of nationalism is 'primarily directed against internal migrant Others, especially Muslims' (2010: 71).[13] It strongly emphasises 'Dutch culture', seeking out and defining this through 'state-led projects, such as the creation of a Dutch historical "canon" and a new national history museum' (2010: 70) and the creation of a 'naturalisation ceremony' for those seeking to become Dutch citizens. As Verkaik describes, creating this ceremony involved 'invent[ing] key symbols for the elusive concept of "Dutchness"' (2010: 74) – a tricky task as the Dutch do not attach much significance to their flag or national anthem and 'symbols like the tulip were felt to be so commercialised as to no longer have any cachet' (ibid.). The job was largely left to local bureaucrats who came up with many creative solutions, including the following.

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

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

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

Veiling and unveiling heritage

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

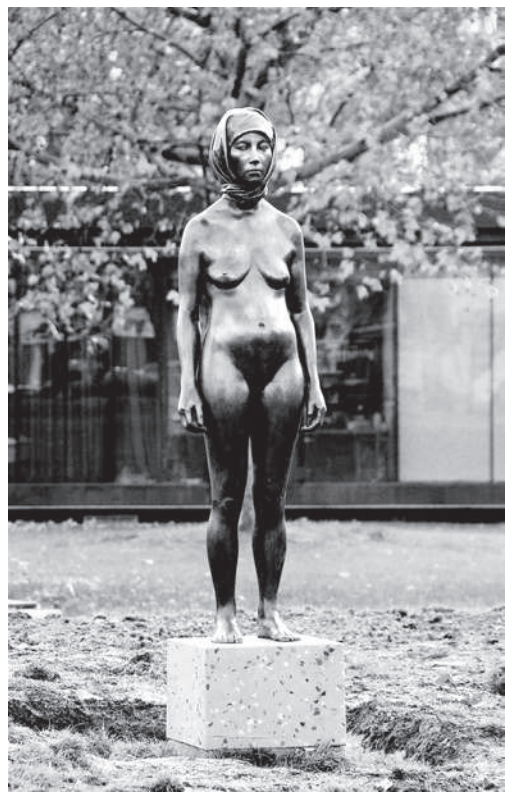

FIGURE 7.1 *Turkish Delight*, by Olaf Metzel, 2006, in the park of Kunsthalle Wien, 2007. Photograph by Wolfgang Woessner © Kunsthalle Wien public space

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

Turkish Delight is a hybrid form in its mixing of the classical nude with what has become one of the most visible and contested markers of Islam – the veil. Sculptor Olaf Metzel intended to provoke in his depiction of woman, naked except for the veil covering her hair – a depiction that affronts Islam's prohibition on public revelation of the female body – and thus, as the Kunsthalle's website explains, to draw attention to 'the precarious relationship between Orient and Occident … and the commercial exploitation of the feminine body in Western media-driven mass society'.[14] As Göle notes, the statue is not sexually provocative (2009: 288) but, with its downcast eyes, is rather demure and understated, though its title suggests orientalised sensory temptation. She argues, however, that despite the fact that the sculptor is male and not Turkish, and although the representation of a veiled woman naked, alone in a public park, is not a depiction of literal reality, the statue nevertheless expresses some of the contradictions and tensions experienced by Turkish women in European cities, who may feel alone, 'caught between past and present [and] conflicting symbolic orders' (2009: 290). As such, the statue should not be dismissed as a Western artist's perhaps rather crass or naïve provocation but understood as a more complexly transcultural form. Likewise, the toppling of the statue by two men (probably) from Vienna's migrant Turkish community should not necessarily be seen as a straightforward act of rejection of an 'outside perspective' by that 'community' as a whole. *Turkish Delight* can be regarded, then, as an expression of *Anwandlungen* – a 'cultural intermingling' in which there is an

attempt to convey the new cultural fusions and contradictions of contemporary European heritage. Turkish women *are* now part of Vienna's public space and *Turkish Delight* more or less officially acknowledges this, inscribing it into the city's sculptural public heritage. At least, it did until the statue was toppled and removed. In this sense, the sculpture performed a monumental function. But this was a rather different performance from that of the nineteenth century monument, both in its attempts at cultural fusion and lack of stylistic grandeur; and in its form of a generalised, though gender and ethnically specified, figure rather than a particular hero or icon for 'everyman' emulation. While traditional monumental sculptural forms continue to be built for public space within Europe today – as we saw, for example, in the second of the monuments built for the 1956 Uprising in Budapest (discussed in the Prologue) – there is also a search for new forms, that partly borrow from earlier forms but also specifically strive to avoid certain features of earlier monumentality. Often abstract, and perhaps also defying enduring physical presence – as with many 'counter-monuments', discussed in the following chapter – and sometimes more muted and provocative figurations, as in this case, these not only question the idea of who and what should be remembered in public space but also the role of public art. Rather than seeking to establish, confirm and celebrate, or perhaps even, as some argue, contribute to forgetting and 'glorious anesthesia' (Stewart 2005: 336), new memorial forms are as likely to question, unsettle and provoke.[15] In doing so, they constitute public space as one of debate rather validation, as 'made up of, and constituted by and through, the articulation of different perspectives' (Göle 2009: 291).[16] Within this, memorial forms in the cityscape – newly created heritage – become important stimuli for bringing interlocutors together, not necessarily to agree but to engage in some kind of transcultural interaction that in effect creates a public sphere, and in which the role of public art, memory and the very nature of public – and European – space themselves become the subject of debate.

The veil as Islamic heritage

Continuing the debate, in the year after the erection and then toppling of *Turkish Delight,* an exhibition was shown in Vienna's Kunsthalle: 'Footnotes on veiling: *Mahrem'.* Partly organised by Nilüfer Göle, the exhibition came from Istanbul and included work mainly by women artists from a wide range of different countries reflecting in many different ways on veiling. Its title, *Mahrem,* means 'interior, sacred, gendered space' (Göle 2009: 286), thus invoking the veil not as a generalised symbol of Islam but as part of a more subjective experience. As Pnina Werbner points out, references to '*the* veil', understood as a symbol of Islam, are widespread in public debate, so homogenising veiling practices and failing to acknowledge alternative and often more complex motives for veiling among women (2007). Not only does the term 'veil' carry a different semantic load than does 'headscarf', it also obscures variations between the different

forms that it takes, ranging from the light *dupatta* – usually of chiffon and only partially covering much hair – to full covering of the face and body, as in the case of the *burqa*.[17] While the 'meaning' and 'significance' of the veil are most often discussed in public policy in terms of the submission of women to strict tenets of Islam – with the degree of veiling being equated with the degree of submission – and, as such, as a matter of whether 'tradition' or 'modernity' prevails, Werbner explains that the subjective motivations may be otherwise, and often 'complex and … situational' (2007: 173). In general, she argues, the significance of the veil for women is more concerned with the articulation of modesty and piety than a religious statement. As such, bans on its presence in public space – as in French schools – become matters of individual human rights. Moreover, she argues, veiling can accord women more rather than less agency. On the basis of her fieldwork with Punjabi women in England, she writes about how some of the younger women adopt 'stricter' forms of veiling than their mothers, and that this performance of greater religious observance gives them greater agency in choosing their own marriage partners and determining their own destinies more generally. Many such younger women argue that traditional Islam allows women greater freedom and they use their veiling as a way of entering public space in ways that allow them to do so with fewer restrictions than they could otherwise (Werbner 2007: 175–6). Likewise, in Germany, Ruth Mandel reports some Turkish women choosing to take up wearing headscarves to signal their identity as Turkish – and not German, an identity that also carries significance as a statement of what they see as more honourable sexual mores (2008: Chapter 11).

As is evident from examples provided by both Werbner and Mandel, 'tradition' is frequently invoked in these debates. This is often 'tradition' as an outmoded, unreflexive practice (see also Ghodsee 2008, 2010 for Bulgaria). Not only is this sometimes deployed in public debate, especially in relation to women's agency, it may also be used, as Werbner shows, by the younger 'more Islamic' women who argue that their parents are just following rural traditions rather than 'more correct' forms of Islamic heritage (2007: 171). At the same time, however, describing veiling as a matter of 'tradition' or 'heritage' can be effective in contexts in which even a weak form of multiculturalism operates, for 'tradition' and 'heritage' are automatically regarded as worthy of respect and retention. It is perhaps partly for this reason that the European media often contain commentaries about veiling among certain communities as relatively recent or as not fully endorsed by the Qur'an. Similarly, fashionable veils – the market in which has massively increased (Navaro-Yashin 2002) – or the wearing of them with fashionable clothing, are also sometimes taken as a sign of inauthenticity, and, therefore, as not requiring the respect that heritage should usually be accorded (Mandel 2008: 309). What might otherwise be regarded as a form of transcultural accommodation, then, is often excluded by the invocation of heritage discourse. Yet as various scholars point out, veiling practices and meanings have long been subject to change, not least across generations,[18] as indeed is so often the case for traditions more generally.

The unwillingness to acknowledge the veil as legitimately changing, however, is to regard it as part of an inflexible tradition, characterised by an outmoded and repressive gender relations. It is an element of the same processes of demarcating sharp boundaries around Islam that Karin van Nieuwkerk describes in her analysis of the experience of Dutch women converts to Islam. These women all related experiences of being defined by non-Muslims as 'foreign' – in myriad, sometimes stark and sometimes subtle, ways – despite their Dutch citizenship and upbringing. Veiling, in particular, intensified the reactions to them; van Nieuwkerk arguing that for most Dutch 'the veil is the symbol of foreignness' and 'of female degradation' (2004: 242). She sees this as understood by the Dutch not just as a contravention of 'Dutch' qualities but of 'a kind of universal non-identity…consisting of tolerance, freedom and emancipation with which converts are evaluated and considered to fall short since they are Muslim' (2004: 244). Likewise, in an analysis of public discourse surrounding 'Islamophobic' incidents involving veiling in Germany, Beverly M. Weber observes that the women's agency as citizens is underreported in the media: '[t]he headscarf [thus]… acts as the marker of cultural otherness that prohibits their participation in a democratic public sphere' (2012: 114). The result is that '[t]he subject of democracy remains abstracted and unmarked but firmly "European"' (2012: 114).

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

Transcultural heritage in the museum

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

on British work (including art with a local and regional emphasis). The new exhibitionary identity 'experiment' thus took place within a space designed for an earlier civic, largely monocultural, identity project.

Bradford's largest migrant population is from South Asia, having developed during the 1960s and 1970s, and, by the early 1990s, constituting approximately 81,000 out of a total of a population of 484,000. The largest group of these migrants came from Pakistan and Kashmir but with many too from other parts of India and Bangladesh, and so including a range of religious affiliations – Islam, Hinduism and Sikhism – and languages: Urdu, Hindi, Bangladeshi and Gujarati.[19] In addition, the city has significant minorities from Africa and the Caribbean; and within the city's 'white' population, Bradford has a history of immigration beginning with the Irish who came from the 1820s and the Germans, Poles, Ukrainians and Italians who followed them. During the 1970s racial tensions – usually framed as either 'Asian' or 'black' versus 'white' – grew, partly in relation to growing unemployment; and the early 1980s saw race riots there, as well as in various other British cities, and a flourishing of reports on 'race-relations'.[20] In 1989, a copy of Salman Rushdie's *The Satanic Verses* (1988) was publicly burnt here, bringing Bradford forcibly to global attention as a site of cultural and religious passion and fundamentalism.

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

There was clearly a risk, however, that the museal logic of culture would act to reify South-Asian culture as an exotic 'other' presence within the galleries. This can be seen as part of a broader dilemma of the politics of recognition and of social inclusion, which themselves typically work with a model of discrete 'cultures', often through the trope of 'community' (Çağlar 1997).[21] In a robust critique of the politics of social inclusion, Irit Rogoff argues that

> this infinitely expansive inclusiveness is actually grounded in an unrevised notion of the museum's untroubled ability simply to *add* others without losing a bit of the self ... [I]t assumes the possibility of change without loss, without alteration, without remapping the navigational principles

> that allow us to make judgments about quality, appropriateness, inclusion and revision.
>
> (2002: 66)

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

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

Transcultural connections

It is worth looking more closely here at the strategies that Poovaya Smith used to try to express the transcultural. First, there are the areas of collection. These included the themes of some of the temporary exhibitions and were subject-matters which cut across territorial boundaries. Thus, gold and silver, for example, are not only the chosen media for many skilful artists across much of South Asia (rather than just certain countries) but also have symbolic and social significance across a wide area. Moreover, some of these skills and significances reach across to West Yorkshire and other sites beyond South Asia. Islamic calligraphy also provided an opportunity to explore a subject that, while of especial interest to Muslims in Bradford, also stretched across a wide geographical territory, drawing its examples not only from South Asia but also from the Middle-East. The collecting strategy was, however, even more encompassing than this, for Poovaya Smith also included works by some British artists not of South Asian origin but who have been influenced by South Asian styles. So, for example, jewellery by Clarissa Mitchell and Roger Barnes was included in the original exhibition on gold. This was, however, objected to

by some members of the 'South Asian community' in Bradford on the grounds that these artists 'were exploiting the subcontinent for their own ends' (Poovaya Smith 1991: 126). Poovaya Smith's view, however, was that the work of these artists 'did not so much imitate Indian jewellery so much as let the influence of India itself impress itself upon their work, often in highly original ways' (1991: 126); and she chose, therefore, to ignore this criticism: 'The voices of the community are important voices but they do not necessarily always embody a God-like infallibility or collective wisdom' (ibid.). In doing so, she privileged her 'transcultural' vision over that which, from this perspective, 'indicated a certain narrowness of vision and prejudice' (ibid.). This was not the only area of potential dissent. In the exhibition on gold, Poovaya Smith hoped to include commentary on the 'pernicious' elements of dowry which sometimes result in 'dowry deaths' where a bride's family is unable to pay the sums, generally in the form of gold jewellery, demanded by a groom's family. She consulted a group of people from 'the community' who were all very much in favour of this idea, though they did not want this to be the only dimension of the subject discussed. However, these selected 'community representatives' were all under 35 years old and had grown up in Britain. An exhibition in Leicester on a similar theme received a very different response when older members of 'the South Asian community' were consulted. There 'the community' argued that anything which might caste a negative light on South Asian cultural practices should not be displayed in a museum (see Poovaya Smith 1991: 122–5). Evident here is that the trope of community can mask differences of perspective, including about how culture should be represented. Also clear are differing expectations about the role of the museum – as a representation of uncontested culture or as a possible prompt for debate.

In attempting to cut across geographical and traditional 'community' identities, the exhibitions in the Transcultural Galleries do nevertheless employ the idea of *locality* in relation to Bradford or West Yorkshire itself. Again, however, this is done not so much to 'museumise' a clear-cut identity as to highlight the plural nature of the locality and to explore the theme from multiple perspectives. (The slippage between referring to the locality as 'Bradford' and as 'West Yorkshire' is itself indicative of the fact that locality is not precisely demarcated.) Thus, while the exhibition contains a substantial proportion of work either from the Indo-Pakistan subcontinent or by artists who self-identify as at least partly from this region, many, though by no means all of these are also from Bradford. Moreover, the galleries also contain works by artists from West Yorkshire, such as David Hockney, who have no South Asian connections; and there are various other items, such a Japanese suit of armour, whose only 'Bradfordness' lies in the fact that it was originally purchased by a Bradford philanthropist. The theme of locality is also explored through various commissioned works where artists were asked to reflect on either the city of Bradford or Cartwright Hall and its collections themselves. Such works include Lubna Chowdhary's miniature mysticised sculptures

of Bradford buildings; Fahmida Shah's cryptic and surprising depiction of a motorbike (which was part of a temporary exhibition at Cartwright Hall) as an artistic reflection on Cartwright Hall; and Mah Rana's contemporary jewellery, with titles such as 'I never promised you a rose garden', which provide elegant ironic commentaries on South Indian marriage pendants.

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

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

FIGURE 7.2 Connect, Cartwright's Textile Story, Cartwright Hall Art Gallery. Foreground: 'Dr Edmund Cartwright', 1901 by Henry Fehr. Left: 'Tree of Life and Leaves', 2008, blockprinted silk and cotton hangings by Jaipur master printer Abdul Rashid. Right: Samuel Cunliffe Lister (1815–1906) by John Collier. Photograph reproduced courtesy of Bradford Museums and Galleries

alongside a Popart screen-print classic of the western equivalent, Hollywood icon 'Marilyn Monroe', 1967, by Andy Warhol.

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

In order to try to escape from geographical definitions and 'the trope of community', and the 'taken-for-granted isomorphism of culture, place and people' (Çağlar 1997: 174) that these tend to conjure up, Ayşe Çağlar suggests focusing on 'person-object relations as these exist in space and time' (1997: 180). Thus, rather than beginning with 'a community' or a geographical area, her methodological suggestion is to begin with objects and then, '[b]y plotting the networks of interconnected practices surrounding objects, and the sentiments, desires and images these practices evoke, we can avoid the need to

define collectivities in advance' (ibid.).[25] The *Transcultural Galleries* and *Connect* at Cartwright Hall exemplify this, with objects, rather than any particular geographical or ethnic categories, as the beginning point and main content of the exhibition. Moreover, by having rather little text in the exhibition (for the most part there are only short labels giving the artist's name, the title of the work and its date), it is able to largely circumvent geographical or ethnic descriptions. In this respect, the exhibition medium has a clear advantage over, say, a written account in that it can privilege objects and do away with linguistic categorisation almost entirely. In doing so, however, it risks forgoing the second stage of Çağlar's methodological process: the plotting of the social and cultural networks in which the objects are more usually enmeshed, and, as such, an endorsement of 'globalism as a kind of super-sociality' that may also 'conceal' that which does not connect or problematic connections, as Marilyn Strathern cautions (2002: xv). While leaving objects 'to speak for themselves' may be an appropriate strategy for art works which can be seen (controversially) as a more calculated attempt to speak directly to the viewer, it means that the biographical contexts of much that is displayed – the lives, worlds and histories of which they were part, the contexts which give meaning to the objects – are given much less shrift than their formal, 'artistic' qualities. At least one commentator on the *Transcultural Galleries* found the labelling 'predictable' and remarked that the approach was 'not innovative' at this level (Lovelace 1997: 22). As this commentator also noted, however, this problem was one that was being well countered by the employment of a linked CD-ROM in the exhibition which includes quotes (e.g. by the artists involved), video footage of various artefacts being demonstrated in use, and – perhaps most innovatively – videos of visitor discussion groups making various thematic links between works on display (ibid.); and *Connect* extends this further, also into thoughtful labels, sometimes encouraging visitors to see global and historical links that are not necessarily legible to most on the surfaces of the objects themselves.

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

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

FIGURE 7.3 Video commentary in *Connect*, Cartwright Hall, Bradford. Photograph by Sharon Macdonald, reproduced courtesy of Bradford Museums and Galleries

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

Exhibiting migration

Since the opening of the *Transcultural Galleries* there have been numerous further exhibitions that attempt in various ways to recognise cultural diversity within Europe today and also to rethink how the nation is performed (Ostow 2008). That many of these are framed in terms of ambitions to 'increase social inclusion', 'bring communities together' or 'foster intercultural communication', speaks both to the fact that museums and exhibitions are widely conceptualised as social agencies, capable of initiating or channelling social change, as well as to a predominant working model of separate communities and cultures. While the latter is often part of the social reality within which cultural institutions operate – that is, they may be confronted by self-identifying 'communities' requesting that their 'own culture' is represented in the museum – their challenge is to make

sure that they do not overlook more hybrid, transcultural forms or identities, and also that they do not contribute to further reifying pristine 'cultures' and so generating further 'exclusions'.[27]

Migration itself has become a frequent topic of exhibitions and of an expanding number of new museums in Europe. The most high profile, and so far only *national* museum of migration in Europe, is the Cité Nationale de l'Histoire de l'Immigration (the National Museum of the History of Immigration), which opened in Paris in 2007, partly in response to growing unrest in areas of high migrant populations in Paris.[28] Both Switzerland and the UK are currently considering the case for national museums on this topic.[29] More often, however, the topic is included in smaller museum developments and individual exhibitions, usually run by local museums and migrant organisations. In Germany, for example, the organisation DOMiD (*Dokumentationszentrum und Museum über die Migration in Deutschland*/ Documentation Centre and Museum of Migration in Germany) – originally established by Turkish migrants but since expanded to include many other migrants – has been especially instrumental in organising or co-organising exhibitions, such as *Projekt Migration,* which ran in various locations in 2005.[30] City Museums and ethnographic museums have frequently mounted exhibitions, or devoted sections of the museum, to immigration and communities with migrant backgrounds. In addition, there is also a growth in numbers of museums of emigration, for example, in Denmark, Ireland and Portugal. The cultural dynamic of these differs from the focus on immigration – and the increasing multi- and fusion-culture of Europe – but they act as a reminder nonetheless of global movement.[31]

A major question concerning these museums and exhibitions is how far they succeed in allowing for more fluid and possibly transcultural identity formations. Kirsten Poehls argues that exhibitions on migration 'challenge the relevance of the nation' (2011: 350–1), unsettling partly simply by the fact that they focus on movement rather than boundaries. She observes that maps are frequently used in such exhibitions. While maps have been part of the visual apparatus for assembling the nation-state, she suggests that maps in migration exhibitions may work differently, to '*undercut* the meaning of European geopolitical boundaries' (2011: 345, original emphasis) and even disrupt the taken-for-granted objectivity of the map, with their arrows showing movement across borders and perhaps more subjective, personalised mappings of routes taken by particular migrants. Another prevalent visual trope in migration exhibitions is the suitcase (Macdonald 2008: 56; Poehls 2011: 346). As Poehls notes, this is an apt metaphor for the 'cultural baggage' that migrants take with them (ibid.). The suitcase evokes culture as package-able, containable and transportable across borders; but perhaps also hints at a transitory status, as requiring unpacking. And in exhibitions such as the thoughtful *Destination X* in the Museum of World Cultures in Gothenburg, which addresses migration and forced movement alongside tourism and business travel, the multiplicity of suitcases exhibited

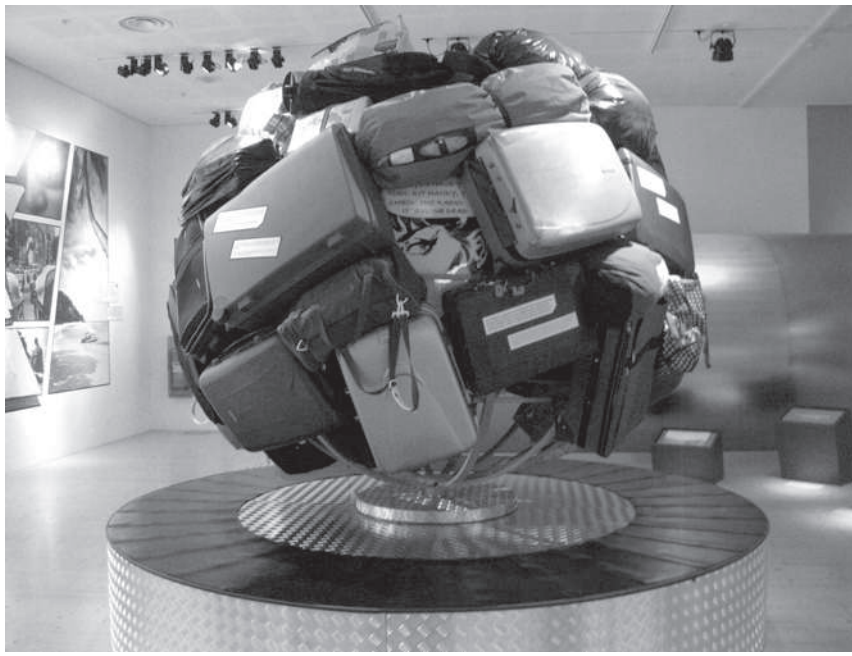

FIGURE 7.4 Exhibition of 'world' of suitcases in Destination X, Museum of World Cultures, Gothenburg, Sweden. Photograph by Sharon Macdonald, reproduced courtesy of the Museum of World Cultures

reminds further that it is not just migrants who carry 'cultural baggage' across borders (Poehls 2011: 347).

While exhibitions and museums addressing migration and cultural diversity are certainly capable of expanding the range of 'voices' included in the public sphere, and, in this way, of potentially unsettling existing identity formations, they do not necessarily do so, or not as extensively as they might. One strategy that has been much deployed is the object-biography.[32] In many ways this follows Çağlar's injunctions above to begin not with a community or population, but to make the object or collection the focus for highlighting different players and their connections. Sometimes this can be rather innocuous and even turn into heroic stories of collectors, but done well it can highlight unexpected connections and histories, and give real detail to colonial encounters or the politics by which objects may travel to museums. As such, it can be capable of injecting certain memories into a public sphere from which they were previously absent and at the same time of revealing processes of public memory-making and earlier forgetting. A related approach begins with individuals and their stories. As well as allowing for a traversing of cultures and categories, this can also have the effect of humanising an exhibition, allowing for identifications at more intimate, personal, levels. We are presented with the city, or nation, not through some overall account but through individual portraits – especially

of migrants of various kinds. It is a recovery of individual variety; it avoids reducing the place to a single persona, to the long-time resident perhaps; and it signals the multiplicity of cultural heritage and memory. Too often, however, it is reduced to a rather insubstantial formula of the smiling face accompanied by a text which shows multiple cultural affiliations – a liking for chapatis and hip hop and Manchester United, thus reducing those displayed to a new motif: that of the 'happily hybrid citizen' (Macdonald 2008: 56). The real content of their difference, and perhaps the dilemmas that they face because of it, is submerged under the sea of smiling faces and the uncannily similar form that the depictions take. In her analysis of the Cité Nationale de l'Histoire de l'Immigration and Ellis Island Migration Museum in the US, Julie Thomas also points out how individual migration stories are presented as 'memory of the *process* of becoming, rather than any specific culturally defined memory'. She argues that this

> succeeds in normalizing and rationalizing the process of migration. The economic threat of migrant communities is defused by the narrative of *plus ça change,* and the cultural threat of transnational identities is removed as they are seen as subject contributors to the national heritage.
>
> (Thomas 2011: 220)

Another brake on the potential unsettlement of migration stories is the tendency for these to crystallise rather than dissolve a division between migrants and non-migrants. That is, migration, migrants and descendants of migrants are staged against a backdrop of an assumed stable, usually national, population. This may be accentuated by the geo-politics of location: migration being, perhaps, included only in temporary exhibitions or a museum's more marginal spaces. The Cité Nationale de l'Histoire de l'Immigration is located far from the centre of Paris, in an area rarely visited by tourists and, moreover, is in a former building of colonial administration that has subsequently served as a museum of the colonies and then of African and Oceanic art. Rather than making migrants central to French society, therefore, they remain – in museological topography – in its margins, part of a colonial inheritance requiring administration and perhaps too without yet quite having rid themselves of the taint of the colonial curio. According to Andrea Meza Torres' ethnographic observations (2011), based on fieldwork in the Cité Nationale de l'Histoire de l'Immigration, this plays out in other aspects of the museum's practice too. The well-intentioned deployment of ethnically diverse – and ethnically clad – front-of-house staff, for example, ends up, she argues, making the museum appear to be engaged in a continuation of colonial relations and empire. In some ways the problem is exacerbated by the relative inattention to colonialism itself in the museum. As Mary Stevens (2009) shows from her fascinating detailed analysis of the making of the museum, this was not always the case but a series of decisions about 'containment' of the topic of immigration and disciplinary specialisms contributed to its marginalisation in the finished exhibitions.

⋆ ⋆ ⋆

This chapter has considered the challenge posed to the existing memory-identity complex by migration, and the transculturalism that this potentially – though far from inevitably – unleashes. It has done so especially in relation to heritage, in some of its most widespread cultural forms: monuments and museums. Precisely because these have been so implicated in identity work – especially in the assemblage of stable, national identities – they constitute key sites in which to examine some of the claims of identity transformation. What we have seen in this chapter are transformations in museums and monuments, as part of a struggle to address and perhaps even shape the changing identity-constellations of Europe today. In particular, what we have seen is heritage being drawn upon in less declarative and more provocative modes. That is, we see heritage being actively deployed not in service of ontological and legitimacy claims but as part of a more tentative setting out of alternatives or even an explicit provocation to debate. This is not only a change of the operation of heritage but also a reconfiguring of the public sphere and of the role of material cultural forms – monuments/public sculpture and exhibitions and museums – within it. Rather than constituting authoritative 'definitive statements', exhibitions and public sculpture increasingly operate in more conversational modes to help encourage the making of a more fluid, plural and contested public sphere. This is not to say that this is the only direction, however. Existing forms persist and even proliferate alongside new, more plural, interventions; and those interventions, and even the transcultural itself, can be, and are, contested, as we have seen in examples in this chapter. In addition, and as we have also seen here, both the migrant and the transcultural can be pushed to the margins of what then becomes even more fully 'mainstream'; or they may even be appropriated – partially and perhaps with significant 'blanks' – within it. It is also salutary to note that it is probably still the case that for the most part new museums and monuments are being produced in the service of making and defending discrete 'cultures' rather than to help encourage the transcultural or conversational.

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

As we have seen, the transcultural is usually conceptualised as a set of connections across or between cultures. This is the limit – and at least partial reality – against which it may also struggle. Just as a network is typically

conceptualised as a mesh of threads between nodes or junctions, each 'trans'-(cultural)-action easily ends up being thought of as a movement between two points.[33] But this may not be enough to transcend either the existing model of culture or the national with which it is so often entangled. Perhaps cosmopolitan heritage and memory forms offer more potential to do so? Or perhaps it is possible not to dispense altogether with the national or the models of culture with which it is associated but nevertheless to simultaneously allow for, and encourage, more open understandings? The next chapter explores this further.