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THE FUTURE OF MEMORY – AND FORGETTING – IN EUROPE

> It is a poor sort of memory that only works backward.
>
> Lewis Carroll[1]

Memory is never only about the past. As examples throughout this book have shown, what is remembered, how and by whom, is deeply entangled with both the present and the future. Sometimes this is instrumental – pasts are crafted to serve present interests and try to determine futures – but more often it is embedded in uncalculated and untidy, embodied as well as verbally articulated, ongoing practice. What is remembered is not always what people might wish to recall; forgetting can be difficult, not least when there are material prompts to recollection or others who want to ensure that certain pasts are kept in mind. Equally, some pasts can slip out of memory, unspoken and undocumented, though perhaps still retained in fragments and traces, available for later past presencing.

In this book, we have seen a wide array of forms of past presencing in Europe. These range from the active crafting of histories and traditions, often, though not only, by nation-states and institutions of the European Union, to involuntary, embodied triggers of memory. These do not necessarily exist separately from one another: hearing a national anthem may evoke earlier memories of hearing it and, perhaps, senses of belonging or exclusion; a taste from childhood might prompt reflection on what has been lost or rediscovered in processes of Europeanisation. By looking especially at some of the growing body of rich anthropological research on Europe, I have sought to highlight past presencing in practice, often occurring outside state recognition or relatively ignored within official process. This shows variations across Europe and within nation-states – sometimes even between neighbouring localities; and at the same time, it also

reveals certain patterns – persistent concerns, themes and forms – within the European memory complex. Below I reflect further on the implications of these themes and this variety. One persistent pattern that has been a focus of this book is the memory phenomenon itself. A key question is whether this preoccupation with memory, history and heritage – especially with its materialisation and museumisation – will persist into the future. Will an emphasis on memory be an enduring feature of the European complex? Is gathering up so much past sustainable or might Europe sink under the sheer weight of its memorylands? As I discuss below, this question about the future of memory also reaches into further questions of what an emphasis on memory produces and what is at stake in remembering – and in forgetting. Here, the reconfigured forms of heritage and memory production – seeking to articulate new identity possibilities – discussed in the later chapters of the book also deserve attention. Perhaps they will simply add to the memory mountain, or perhaps they will allow for a supplanting and waning of earlier forms in a reconstitution of Europe's public spheres.

Europe's pasts

Some pasts loom especially large in both official and popular memory within Europe. That of World War II is perhaps the largest and loomiest, and, as we saw in the previous chapter, far from fading with the passage of time, its public marking is increasing, including in locations where there was little direct experience of war or Holocaust. While on the one hand it acts as a shared topic of remembrance and commemorative form across Europe, it is also a telling case for considerable variations in remembering. Even while there are developments that seem to 'forget' national differences, as Levy and Sznaider argue, there are also – especially if we look closely at what people say in everyday life, and at the detailed content of commemoration – still considerable variations both at national and sub-national level. Moreover, these differences are available for amplification at key moments of public debate, as we will see further below; and they also play a part in other differences, including positioning in relation to, or within, Europe as a political entity. As we saw in the previous chapter, for example, World War II and the Holocaust can be deployed in public commemoration in the UK in support of a 'Britain alone myth', in a way that would not be possible in other European countries; and that, arguably, contributes to the relatively Euro-sceptic position of the UK. By contrast, Germany's history of perpetration is a continued source for debate about questions of guilt and nationalism, and for some Germans' relative attraction to – and even 'flight into' – Europe, as discussed in Chapter 2. It has ramifications for forms of recollection by individuals and within families, as we saw in Chapter 3, though some of these, such as the hope for grandparents who behaved decently, are surely also more widespread. It also clearly plays a part in the constant vigilance for signs of growing neo-Nazism, in German intellectuals and artists playing leading international roles in reflecting on questions of social and cultural memory, witnessed, for example, in the

Historical Consciousness Project discussed in Chapter 2, and in the making of counter-monuments, noted in Chapter 8. Perhaps too, as some have argued, it has influenced the development of the compensation theories that seem to romanticise community and a non-industrial past, described in Chapter 6 (see Huyssen 1995). In addition, the enthusiastic embracing of at least some forms of multiculturalism in Germany, as discussed in Chapters 5 and 7, might be seen as part of a repudiation of the racism of its history.[2] In addition, there remains the constant possibility of Germany's past being drawn on by other nations to characterise contemporary developments, not least in relation to its role within Europe, as we will see in a further example below. Clearly, there is much more that might be said here and this brief account does injustice to the complexity of the situation, but it highlights the point that national variations in what counts as significant history – even in relation to a history that is taken as a central plank of modern Europe – remain part of Europe's memorylands.

It is possible to chart the main official positions on World War II and the Holocaust – as well as on other key global and European events, such as World War I and the end of the Cold War – of the various European countries, including to show changes in levels of acknowledging, say, collaboration rather than simply victimhood; and there is good research that has done so through, for example, looking at the content of school history texts or newspapers.[3] At the same time, however, it is important to note that how this plays out at a day-to-day level within particular localities can vary remarkably – as anthropological research is especially good at showing. Take, for example, Italian villages discussed in Chapter 3. In some, described by Francesca Cappelletto, there is a continued, 'emotionally dense', 'choral' remembering of the war; in another, described by Jaro Stacul, it is never mentioned. In the former, the surrounding woods summon up recollections of terror; in the latter they are seen by villagers as a sign of the stability of the past in contrast to the more volatile present. A key feature in this difference is the experience of the villages: those described by Cappelletto were devastated during the war, that by Stacul was untouched. But although actual experience clearly matters – and Cappelletto's villagers surely could not recount their trauma with such emotion and detailed reference to place had it not occurred – what a wide range of in-depth studies show is that it does not determine the extent or shape of recollection. As we also saw in Chapter 3, for example, Hungarian Roma – who were brutally treated by the Nazis – engage in none of the collective, 'choral' recounting that the Tuscan villagers do, neither in any other explicit forms of recollection or commemoration. Equally, more generalised accounts or those from the media can be appropriated as more localised – the experiences of others being made into one's own – as some of the World War II examples in Chapter 3 show.

None of this applies only to World War II and the Holocaust, of course, as evident from many examples – including, more recently, from the Balkan wars – which illustrates the selectivity of memory and processes such as

indirection. Importantly too, the variations that we see concern not only historical content but also modes of remembering – what is sometimes called 'historical consciousness'. Historical depth – the length of memory – is partly a matter of content but extends beyond this in its present and future implications. Not only are those with 'longer memories' more likely to remind us of events from the more distant past, they are also likely to make it known that they will recall far into the future too. But while a long, known history can be a source for making analogies with the present or claiming historical precedent, it can also work to downplay the significance of particular historical events. In a presentation to the European Historical Consciousness project, for example, anthropologist of Japan, Joy Hendry, argued that it was Japan's sense of extensive time-depth that contributed to what the German organisers of the project saw as Japan's stubborn reluctance to address its World War II role. From the Japanese perspective, she suggested, this was just another event in a much bigger history, replete with even more nationally significant events. Perhaps this is also part of some of the apparent overlooking of certain historical events in the Greek cases discussed in Chapter 2. Longer memories are not necessarily more complete.

Temporalities

As well as variations within Europe in the 'length' and 'fullness' of memory, the ethnography of Europe provides numerous examples of variations in forms of temporal reckoning and understanding of the 'movement' or 'stability' of the past. Sometimes, as with the Italian villagers described by Stacul, the past is seen as steady and secure – in this case as rooted in natural rhythms; and this understanding of the past as more reliable and predictable than the present informs various nostalgic longings too. Nearly always, these involve a contrast with what is seen as a more fickle and untrustworthy present – perhaps the present as a fall from a state of grace, as part of a widespread Christianised conception, as Herzfeld suggests in his discussion of 'structural nostalgia' (Chapter 2). This is spoken most eloquently in this book, perhaps, by Jonathan Macdonald of the Skye Museum of Island Life (Chapter 6) in his evocation of 'old things'. It is evident in various ways too in the nostalgias discussed in Chapter 4. What such nostalgias implicitly and often explicitly challenge is an evolutionistic conception of temporality as progress. Treasured 'old things' show that it is not necessarily the case that 'things can only get better'. Perhaps some of the dismissive discourse that nostalgia attracts, especially from intellectuals, lies in its refusal to conform to progressivist narratives. Yet while nostalgias do not accept a logic of continuing improvement over time, the cases in this book also make clear that they are not straightforward wishes to return to the past, and neither – usually – do they regard *every* aspect of the past as better than the present. Rather, what nostalgia allows is an affective but also reflective selection – a mode for comparing and evaluating possible ways

of living. Certainly, it does not typically do so in a rigorous and systematic mode – and usually it entails a skating over of uncomfortable or awkward dimensions of the past – but it may still operate with degrees of subtlety and awareness, evident, for example, in some of the ironic and witty post-Socialist reconstructions of the past, and that of the European 'Red Indians' described by Petra Tjitske Kalshoven (Chapter 5), which manages to be both playful and highly serious at the same time.

Nostalgia is in many respects a problematic term because it is applied to such a range of experiences. In some cases, it is little more than a wistful recollection of the past, whereas in others it acts as a force in contemporary life, perhaps shaping the activities of the state as well as criminals (as with the Greek 'structural nostalgia') or other individuals, and may entail some form of active recovery of certain aspects of the past – a bringing them into the present, perhaps through reconstruction of buildings or the collecting of old things. Sometimes this is experienced as the past forcing its way into the present – as a 'call' from old things themselves. Landscapes, buildings, monuments and other objects that endure over time can be especially compelling in this respect, their duration challenging an understanding of the past as passed. But even new things – a freshly-plucked peach perhaps – can make the past present, in this case its past referencing working through the repetition of natural cycles. Memory, thus, in some sense, doesn't need to 'only work backwards', as the White Queen points out to Alice in Lewis Carroll's *Alice through the Looking Glass*, because the past is ever being made present in numerous ways and because any memory is potentially projectable into the future. Yet still, how this is experienced – whether the past is something that is just part of the surroundings undistinguished from 'the present' or is something that unhelpfully intrudes into ongoing life or provides a welcome refuge from it – nevertheless varies widely, not only between different peoples but sometimes even between different spheres of experience.

This is so, too, for other dimensions of temporality, such as where significant 'breaks' or 'periods' are perceived to lie or the speed with which time is understood to pass. Certainly, disruptive events, such as war, are frequently used in before-after designations, and the idea of 'periods' imagined as thoroughly distinctive crystallises around this. In Germany, the notion of *Stunde Null* – Zero Hour – the year after the end of World War II thus transfigured as the clock beginning to tick again for the first time, represents this particularly well. The strong emphasis in Germany on 'generations' and 'phases' after the war is also part of a related parcelling up of time that serves to make the past more clearly passed (Chapter 2). Yet even such strong periodisation as this does not preclude the drawing of connections into longer histories, perhaps reaching to pasts predating the traumatic period. In Nuremberg, for example, where I conducted ethnographic research, many marketing accounts of the city emphasise its importance for both medieval trade and the industrial revolution – thus identifying what was hoped to be a precedent for the future.

Temporal co-presence

This co-presence of different temporalities – and switching between them – is characteristic of contemporary Europe. Understanding the contemporary world as one of rapid change and swift obsolescence may be commonplace but it can persist alongside perceptions of slower and longer temporalities, afforded by, say, stone monoliths or ancient buildings. Sometimes – as in the slow food movements discussed in Chapter 5 – creating these alternative temporalities, which are usually regarded as having their own roots in past times, is part of a wider moral and aesthetic commentary on rapidity; but it is likely to be only one part of life for most people. As I suggest further below, what 'heritage' offers is an alternative temporality to that of many other parts of life, not only in that it presents other times and perhaps other paces of life, but also in that it creates specific 'condensed' time for contemplation. Here, however, what I want to emphasise is that rather than understanding particular peoples or particular eras as characterised by a single temporal style – as in the 'hot' and 'cold' distinction discussed in Chapter 1 or the division between tradition and modernity discussed in Chapter 2 – alternative temporalities co-exist. They do not do so in isolation from one another, however. Rather, they are part of a semi-linked complex of ideas and practices, mostly fairly loosely assembled, though sometimes more tightly woven together. That is, they are part of what is here called the European Memory Complex – a set of more or less prevalent patterns and alternatives.

The point that co-present temporalities are neither random nor isolated deserves emphasis. There *are* widespread patterns and tendencies, and certain aspects of life are characterised by specific modes of apprehending time. Sometimes the contrast between temporalities is the source of moralising – as in valorisations of slow ways of life; and sometimes certain temporalities are experienced as 'wrong' for particular contexts – as reflected, for example, in some of the unease over the modernisation and commercialisation of tradition and heritage. The coming together of different temporalities can be a source of friction, as in the modern production of 'heritage' foods; or when the 'long' memory of one nation comes into conflict with what seems a shorter memory in another (as in certain points of conflict in the Balkan wars).

In addition, there can be leakage and transfer of certain modes of temporal reckoning into other domains. Science – and especially 'the sciences of memory' – is a major source of such processes. How collective memory is approached has, for example, been shaped by psychological and psychoanalytic theories, especially through notions of confronting difficult and traumatic pasts as often advocated by agencies of memory management, as noted in Chapters 3 and 8. Evolutionary ideas have fed into the formation of national historical narratives, shaping not only the content but also the physical layouts of many museums (Chapter 7); and they inform the idea, discussed especially in Chapter 6, that culture is the kind of thing that can vanish and that might need 'saving'. Their influence can also be seen in configurations of contests between different groups

for public space for the performance of their memory as a 'zero-sum' battle for scarce resources in which only some will survive (Rothberg 2009). Transfer of metaphors is not only one-way, however, as Mary Bouquet shows in an analysis of the prevalence of tree depictions – which have a long history, certainly at least to the Old Testament – in evolutionary theory as well as in some European visual representations of kinship – especially those of the interlinked Royal families (1996; Pálsson 2009). Currently, genetic mapping is providing a new resource for thinking about heritage. In some cases, it seems to feed in to existing ideas about identity and heritage – as in Iceland, for example, which, as a supposedly 'homogeneous population' saw one of the first attempts to genetically map a human population, and where the mapping was interpreted in terms of cultural ideas about longstanding distinctiveness and even 'character' being inherited through 'substance' (Pálsson 2002: 338, 2009). Even here, however, as well as elsewhere and it seems increasingly, genetic mapping is providing a challenge to ideas of clear differentiation of peoples as it shows up unexpected links and ancestries.[4] How far it might thus contribute to a rethinking of popular notions of heritage and identity – through more mixed and multiple models – is an exciting area for the future of memory.

Memory and identity

This discussion of temporalities in this book, then, highlights both variation as well as pattern in how the past is related to ongoing identity; and it seeks to identify both prevalent patterns and some of the variations that help to highlight the cultural and historical specificity of what is prevalent as well as to encourage awareness of the kinds and extent of differences that may be encountered within Europe. It also includes discussion of ethnographic research in Europe that raises the further question of whether collective memory is even necessary for a sense of collective identity. Here, the Roma apparent lack of memory has been the focus of particular perplexity – and perhaps Stewart's attempt to identify traces of this in words used and a continual definition of Roma in opposition to those they call *gazé* speaks to a wider discomfort about those who seem not to care about the past, as much as does the psychoanalytically-driven idea of trying to get them to 'unrepress' their memory of trauma of which he is (rightly) so critical (Chapter 3). Part of the reason why it is so perplexing – and perhaps why research has thrown up so few examples – is surely, as Stewart acknowledges, how deeply it goes against the grain of more common and widespread understandings of memory and identity. In much of Europe – as a major element in the European memory complex – memory is taken for granted as a dimension and even prerequisite of identity. Individual distinctiveness only really 'counts' if it endures over time and if there is self-awareness of this. In analogy with individual identity – the mapping and mutual definition between individual and collective being another major element of the European memory complex – it is not just 'having a past' that matters but being in possession of

memory of oneself over time. Like amnesiac individuals, cases of apparently amnesiac collectives cause concern, throwing into question ideas about what makes persons – and peoples.

Possessions and interiors

As we have also seen in previous chapters, these ideas are bound up, too, with notions of property and possession, and see a physical realisation especially in material heritage. As such, having a heritage is not only a marker of *having* an identity, but is in a sense another materialisation – an embodiment even – of one's (collective) self. This helps to at least partly explain why heritage often seems to matter so much and to be so affectively dense; and why either its desecration or aspersions cast upon its authenticity may generate such strong reactions. It also relates to some of the particular, prevalent, forms that heritage takes. Heritage that recollects persons – through figurative forms, domestic interiors, objects that have been personal possessions, as well as actual dead bodies – seems to be especially compelling. The creation of the 'alternative', traditionally figurative, 1956 monument in Budapest (discussed in the Prologue) was in part propelled by a sense that an abstract monument, even though it tried to literally incorporate those who visited, was not quite up to the task of becoming treasured heritage. In other cases, heritage objects are personified and made part of networks of social relations, as with some of the stone monuments discussed in Chapter 5. The emphasis upon 'home' that has surfaced in many chapters, and been discussed especially in relation to the trauma of dispossession (Chapter 4) and the spread of the musealisation of everyday life, often with reconstructions of domestic interiors (Chapter 6), is another linked element within this memory-identity assemblage. Imagined and often realised as a space of dense sociality and affect, the home is itself a manifestation of possessive individuation, and a home not only to persons but also to other possessions. Moreover, the home operates within the European memory complex as a lived metaphor of the interiorisation of identity itself – that is, of the idea that persons have inner depths that may not necessarily be read off from our surfaces. This is entangled, too, in widely mobilised dualisms between private and public, the authentic and the commercial, the traditional and the modern, and the local and the global. What numerous examples in this book have shown is that the idea that there are spaces and things that matter deeply – and that have enduring significance for identity and, as such, are and will remain ingrained, though perhaps unconscious, in *memory* – is prevalent throughout Europe. Often problematic, however, is defining just what these are and how they can be preserved. Heritage plays this out through innumerable disputes across the continent.

Not only is there a widespread idea in Europe that individuals possess 'inner depths' that exist substantially as personal memory – an idea that is not shared by all peoples either in the present or past – but also that there should be some

kind of 'proper' relationship between inside and outside (Chapter 1). This idea about authentic *expression* extends also to collectives. And so too do problems caused by the possible failures of memory. If the 'interior' – the most personally meaningful – is to be authentically expressed, then the interior needs to be known or at least to be able to 'surface' without being corrupted. The sciences of memory that grew as part of this concern in relation to personal identity (Hacking 1995; see Chapter 1) – producing a spiralling of further concern in the process – have their correlate in the plethora of social memory initiatives that have been the backbone of the museum phenomenon, materialised especially in local history museums. Delving into the past thus provides potential resources for 'knowing who you are' – as so many genealogy sites, that are also part of this phenomenon, advertise – and thus potentially allowing for a more authentic expression of 'real' identity.

Authenticity and change

Here we see further what is at stake in the pervasive concern over authenticity in relation to heritage and memory. Certainly, claims about what is authentic and what is not can be made instrumentally and cynically. But it is also clear that concerns with authenticity – expressed in some form – matter too in contexts that do not involve disputes or potential economic gains. Davydd Greenwood's classic *Alarde* example, discussed in Chapter 5, can be re-interpreted in these terms. According to such a perspective, the crux of the problem was not so much the making of culture explicit, as he suggests, as a mismatch between what was understood as its 'interior' meaning to local people and its appearing as an expression of performance determined by others. Even though local people recalled its original significance and even though the ritual itself retained the same form, it could no longer straightforwardly represent the proud independence of the townspeople. In other contexts, however, as in the *Skye Story* example (also Chapter 5), local identity is defined as selectively absorbing the outside, thus more readily sidestepping the opposition between 'commerce' and 'authentic culture' that is so often raised in these debates.

Again, then, we see a prevalent complex of interrelated ideas that do not work out in identical ways everywhere. Sometimes – as to some extent in the *Skye Story* example – this is because of a conscious and well-articulated attempt to draw on the past to find other 'stories' (as the makers of the heritage centre themselves put it) and to overcome what are seen as cultural constraints that might otherwise restrict flourishing. (And we see aspects of the alternatives against which those at *Aros* position themselves in the following chapter, in the discussion of the museum of folk-life on the same island.) In others, it is how things have come to be, out of the untidy mix of past experience, models mobilised and daily life. Evident in this, too, is that people may well have senses of belonging and of the past that do not necessarily coalesce into a readily recognisable identity-heritage model. The example of the Argonne,

provided by Paola Filippucci (in Chapter 3), shows this well. Here, the sense of repeated *disruption* over time, rather than continuity, provides a sense of the distinctiveness of place and the significance of the past within it. As with the *Skye Story* case, this also produces a model of identity that is more open to the incorporation of 'outsiders' and to change over time than are some other understandings and enactments of heritage. These models are better equipped than the more culturally fundamentalist ones for allowing for migration and the kinds of 'transcultural' heritage that are being developed in new initiatives (Chapter 7). Yet, they can come into conflict with more dominant expectations of heritage. This is evident in the Argonne villagers' cleaning up of historical artefacts in ways that shock the heritage agencies, and was perhaps part of the dilemma for *The Skye Story* – that it contained what some saw as too many reconstructions and things from elsewhere to make it worth visiting as 'heritage' – and that contributed to the closing of the exhibition.

If both the Argonne villagers and *The Skye Story* show – albeit in very different ways – certain alternatives to prevalent heritage-identity constructions, they also simultaneously show the very prevalence of the more typical models. We see this in the self-aware commentary of the makers of *The Skye Story* about other heritage sites and in the Argonne villagers' pointing out that, unlike in other areas, 'we don't even have a cheese'. As tourism and place-marketing spread – and as heritage potentially acts as a resource for drawing in visitors and income – so too does this model, in part at least. Perhaps it will not be long before these villages too have their own *fromage*?

To look at the spread of an 'identikit' of traditional products as just, or necessarily, a 'foreign imposition' upon the local is, however, too sweeping, though, of course, sometimes this is what happens. More often, however, there is a complex interplay between pre-existing and dynamic local conceptions and those that become familiar through the flourishing of so many examples elsewhere. Moreover, heritage models are likely to 'make sense' given other aspects of the memory complex which may already be familiar or even part of local life; and, furthermore, they may offer valuable economic and also expressive resources. The latter may be political – helping to legitimate identities in searches for recognition and the resources that may flow from this. They may also be aesthetic – providing sources of pleasure in the articulation of self. (And indeed both may be intertwined.) As Regina Bendix points out in a discussion that includes examples such as the reworking of traditional song, the aesthetic-expressive is too often overlooked in heritage research, as is its relationship with the economic (2008). At the same time, heritage has certain usual – if not inevitable – implications. Its 'visitability' has been noted in earlier chapters. What this typically produces is a panoply of accompanying visiting paraphernalia – not just the visitors themselves but guide books and signage, perhaps even gift shops, souvenirs and cafés; or, in the case of intangible heritage, the organised performances, CDs and DVDs. The effect is to make whatever culture is so designated 'available' for the consumption by others – and also to

extend it beyond its locality through advertising, photographs and souvenirs. As heritage is also so intertwined with notions of property – with the idea of certain culture as 'ownable', exclusive and indicative of self – it is not surprising that this may feel uncomfortable or even lead to conflict. As we have seen in Chapter 5, however, while the ethnography of Europe provides examples of this it also shows that it is not inevitable. There are ways of 'keeping' even while engaged in exchange.

In this book I have emphasised the importance of in-depth anthropological research that pays attention to what is going on 'on the ground' in specific locales. This does not only mean what is done by villagers or farmers but also what is happening, say, in cities and particular institutions, such as museums; and the activities of official policy makers (what is sometimes called 'studying up') and memory workers, as well as tourists and people who like dressing up in the outfits of past times or using the internet to track down their ancestors. There is much more to be done – not just out of a documentary, collecting urge (though this is certainly worthwhile, perhaps especially in fast-changing contexts) – but also because so much policy and practice hinge on assumptions about matters such as that 'memory' will be materialised in certain ways, that 'communities' will typically have a discrete and distinctive body of heritage that they will want to maintain and present, that certain events will be recalled, perhaps even in similar ways, across Europe and that 'shared' heritage will necessarily bind people together. Understanding more about how this works – and doesn't – is an important prerequisite for further attempts to create any kind of common memory and identity for Europe (as we saw in Chapter 2). Not least, it will surely help highlight how people might relate to these and whether, say, avoiding mention of conflict or potential differences serves to reduce these – or just makes for less effective communication. It must also raise the question – which goes to the heart of what is widely taken for granted in the European memory complex – of whether shared memory really is needed for senses of connection, Europeanness and cosmopolitan conviviality.

Proliferation

For now, however, what is overwhelmingly evident is a proliferation of memory and heritage. Not only have there been more and more 'instances' of heritage and commemoration since the 1970s – that is, more and more buildings and traditions listed, more and more plaques put up, more and more old things collected in museums, more and more websites dedicated to 'must-see' heritage sites – there has also been an expansion of forms of heritage, that is, of what is deemed worthy of preserving and commemorating at all. While the musealisation of ordinary and everyday life pre-dates the 1970s, since then it has not only escalated but also come to include more recent, not necessarily folk, life; and, in particular, there has been a related growth of industrial heritage and of the heritage of migrants, sometimes configured through the topic of

migration (Chapter 7). The heritage of trauma – witnessed for example in the Holocaust heritage discussed in Chapter 8 – has seen perhaps the most remarkable expansion, and increasingly it includes official remembering of crimes perpetrated as well as suffered by the nation.[5]

This proliferation raises the question, however, of whether it can be sustained. How much heritage and memory can Europe take? The question has been asked before. Back in 1984 Australian cultural critic Donald Horne raised it in his description of Europe as 'The Great Museum' (Horne 1984) and in the early 1990s Sir Neil Cossons worried that the whole landmass of the UK would soon be one big heritage site that one would enter on leaving Heathrow airport (1992). Some might say that this is pretty much now the case. But can the emphasis on the past continue? Or, as US historian Gavriel Rosenfeld puts it: 'Is there a looming memory crash?' (2009).

A looming crash?

It is worth looking at Rosenfeld's discussion of a possible demise of memory and heritage for he sets out a number of reasons why such a crash might be looming.[6] His concern is with both academic interest in memory – which he calls 'the memory industry' – and the wider public cultural phenomenon of interest in the past, especially in contested histories and subjective experiences, which he calls 'the memory boom'. The two are, of course, and as he acknowledges, linked.

The main reasons that he gives are, first, that there are simply cycles of fashion and that a boom cannot sustain itself indefinitely; second, that various factors that contributed to the memory boom are now less prevalent or significant; and third, that there are likely to be new concerns that will supplant an emphasis on the past. On the first point, which he makes especially in relation to academic study framed in terms of memory, he claims that most topics are only in fashion for about 20 years and that 'memory' has already lasted longer and so is likely to be nearing its end (2009: 154). In part, he employs a notion of 'natural rhythms' (ibid.), which from an anthropological perspective is, perhaps, more interesting as a specific form of historical consciousness than as an argument. It also, surely, relies upon what we count as a 'topic' – those such as particular periods or geographical regions, and many others that have become part of the internal classification of disciplines, last much longer. He does, however, partly supplement this claim with a suggestion that the field might be seeing 'academic overproduction' and 'exhaustion', scholars increasingly looking to more 'narrowly specialised topics' in the search for something new to say (2009: 157).

This relates too, to his second set of reasons – concerning factors propelling the memory boom. If the latter is itself dwindling, it will throw up fewer new topics for study. Here, he identifies dealing with difficult and contested pasts, especially those in the aftermath of war, and identity-politics as being major

drivers of the memory boom. There has, however, he suggests, been significant progress dealing with awkward histories and conflicts, and while there is still further work to be done, there are now established models, including the spreading of that relatively novel form of the 'official apology' for past perpetrations (2009: 142). Identity politics, he believes, are becoming less compelling as part of a 'new world order post-9/11' and a linked 'waning of post-modernism' (2009: 149). Both postmodernism and identity politics fuelled the growth of interest in counter-memories and subjective experiences of the past that have been such a big part of the memory boom. Post 9/11, however, he claims that there is a growing backlash against this, witnessed in a return to 'objectivity' that will de-centre memory as a topic and approach. A concern that a politics of cultural recognition might contribute more to social problems than it resolves will similarly foster 'a growing desire for national unity' and 'integration' (2009: 148, 149); and searches for alternative models of affiliation rather than difference. Moreover, and this is his third point, with mounting world tensions – especially 'the global spread of radical Islamic terrorism' and the world financial crisis – 'the lure of the past will likely wane' (2009: 149) and memory will come to seem a luxury or even part of a 'neoconservative trend of political quietism' (2009: 154).

Before looking further at some of Rosenfeld's claims, it should be noted that he provides many counter-examples,[7] and concludes much more tentatively with a predicted 'soft landing' rather than a crash. His arguments are worth further attention, however, for they not only contribute to trying to guess whether memory has a future but also, if so, what forms it might take.

While identity politics and conflicts over the past have certainly helped fuel the memory phenomenon, as we have seen in this book, they are certainly not the only factors. Concerns over rapid and mass production, consumerism and social change, also contribute to a fascination with the past and practices such as collecting and preserving 'old things'. So too have opportunities for marking the distinctiveness of places and drawing on tradition as an aesthetic as well as economic resource. Perhaps most of all, however, the past has become something that just *is* made present, that is available to be visited and experienced and – especially importantly – that is available for ethical reflection and emotional encounter. As such, past presencing is not just a response to some temporary political problems or of concern just to a particular academic fashion but taps into more longstanding preoccupations in Europe that will surely continue to play out for many more decades. The phenomena that are so often referred to as cultural or social memory – and that I designate past-presencing and that are the basis of the memory phenomenon – are part of an interconnected complex of thinking and doing that concern so much that matters in contemporary Europe, especially, issues of who 'we' are, which have become unthinkable unless linked to the question of where we have come from. So many practices, interests and institutions are concerned with the memory phenomenon in some form – museums, heritage sites, vintage clothing and cars, collecting antiques and

FIGURE 9.1 'Don't destroy history!' Fragment of the Berlin wall, 2002. Photograph by Sharon Macdonald

retro furniture, traditional music and slow foods, to name but some – that, as assemblage theory would suggest, it has gained its own weight and inertia that will contribute to its durability into the future. Memory, as we have seen, has become deeply interwoven in much – if not all – of Europe in important matters such as how property, the home, nation and belonging are conceptualised and performed. Forgetting, moreover, has come to seem pathological – a failure not simply to recall particular details about the past but a kind of failure of self. That history and its artefacts should not be destroyed has become mostly taken-for-granted axiom – even if it sometimes needs to be proclaimed on walls (Figure 9.1). All of this, surely, makes it unlikely that memory and past presencing will become less preoccupying in any near or even medium term.

Demise of identity politics and conflict?

But what of the future of identity politics and contested history? It should be noted, first of all, that the concern with identity in the European memory complex is considerably broader and more ramifying than the developments that are usually designated by the term 'identity politics', which typically refers to calls for recognition from groups which consider themselves marginalised

by the state. Nevertheless, with reference to the latter, it seems to me that there are fewer active new calls for recognition – demands by minorities to have their memories inserted into public space. This, however, is not so much a function of a waning of concern as of the fact that there are so many initiatives underway to recover and include marginal, forgotten or migrant memories into the public sphere (Chapter 7). While these may involve, or be begun by, activists – or 'memory entrepreneurs' or 'ethno-preneurs' – from what are now so often called 'communities', they frequently involve some form of official or state support, and in many cases it is memory workers from museums or other organisations who initiate the developments.[8] As we have seen, however, there have been concerns expressed by politicians about whether such approaches can help foster senses of collective citizenship and belonging to the nation or to Europe. Yet to create new national or European histories that exclude such memories would surely be a mistake – stimulating greater senses of exclusion and disenfranchisement as well as providing a basis for future memory contests. Like the UK's first Holocaust Memorial Day (Chapter 8) or its opening ceremony for the 2012 Olympics, acknowledging and including memories of the country's diverse population allows for cosmopolitan conviviality and inclusion even under the umbrella of the nation.

This might, however, imply that this incorporation could be completed and all memory work done, as Rosenfeld suggests may happen for contested histories, especially in the aftermath of war. But this seems unlikely. As we have seen, making nations and other entities, such as Europe, is not a 'once-and-for-all' matter but needs constantly re-making. Remembering has to happen anew and repeatedly. It works backwards and forwards. In doing so, remembering is unlikely to happen precisely as it did before; just as, say, nations are configured differently over time, not least in relation to new events, changing global circumstances, migration and the emergence of new memories. Moreover, each commemorative event is potentially a source of contest over the relative emphasis given to different memories – as was also the case with the UK's first Holocaust Memorial Day.

As a historian of German Nazism, it is the German case that informs much of Rosenfeld's optimism that the past may cease to be the source of conflict. Yet although Germany can be said to have led the way in facing up to its difficult past, with many impressive and thoughtful developments that do serve as models elsewhere, the situation seems to me much less settled than he implies. Creating museums and memorials, and making official apologies, have become widespread means of acknowledging perpetration and trauma. Yet, these do not necessarily always work in conciliatory ways, as we saw, for example, in the controversies over the 1956 Memorial in Budapest; and even in Germany some of the most high-profile developments, such as the Holocaust memorial and Jewish Museum, have generated controversy and accusations of creating 'alibis'.[9] The official apology – now widely globalised – does not always succeed in ending senses of disgruntlement and, as it is increasingly employed, seems

to lose its moral currency, coming to be seen more and more as a cynical 'going through the motions' undertaken in place of more adequate addressing of wrongs perpetrated and their continuing consequences.[10]

Moreover, even in the case of Germany there is surely still much unfinished business, for example, in relation to the Socialist past that may in future erupt in forms other than the current *Ostalgie* (Chapter 4), as well as in relation to expulsions of Poles from Germany, and Germans from Poland, during and after World War II. The incorporation of memories of migration, especially from Turkey, has expanded with many reflective initiatives but still remains incomplete and marginal within the nation (Chapters 7 and 8). Even with reference to Nazism and Holocaust, although from many official points of view 'closure' has been achieved, there are others who would suggest otherwise. In Nuremberg, for example, the sense of having now faced up to the Nazi past in some landmark initiatives, such as a documentation centre (Macdonald 2009a), seems to inflect upon recent governmental reluctance to fund some of the major upkeep necessary for maintaining former Nazi buildings. The dedicated staff with whom I worked at the former Nazi party rally grounds are, however, emphatic that such upkeep is crucial to ensure that future generations will be able to encounter this history and they continue to see the need for new projects, not least in relation to changing demographic and political constellations in Germany.[11] Moreover, there has been no reduction in the number of visitors coming from around the world, as well as across Germany, to learn more about this past.

Memory as luxury

Let me turn, finally, to Rosenfeld's suggestion that we only look back when times are easy and we have the luxury to do so. While this might be partly applicable to the expansion of practices such as collecting and heritage tourism,[12] it overlooks how the past is invoked in the very unluxurious circumstances of war and conflict, as in the Balkan wars. More generally, it is unclear that difficult presents are less likely to encourage an interest in the past. As Dan Stone remarks in a discussion of the future of attention to the past in the 'new Europe', 'the more uncertain the present and future look, the more memory – precisely because it is future-oriented – will continue to be an arena of contestation' (2012: 730). Even in relation to the two 'crises' that Rosenfeld suggests will come to preoccupy us in future years more than will the past – namely, 'financial crisis' and 'radical Islamic terrorism' – it is hardly the case that questions of memory, history and heritage are absent. In relation to the financial crisis, memory and heritage have suffused how debates and actions in have been played out in Europe, with countries variously reaching into the past for precedents, reasons and excuses. This has been especially marked between Germany and Greece – two countries that, as we have seen, are both much concerned with history though keen to draw the lines rather differently. Take what might be called 'the battle of the

FIGURE 9.2 Heritage battles in Europe's financial crisis. Greek newspaper showing altered image of the Greek Goddess of Victory on Berlin's Victory Column (Siegessaüle), in which she holds a swastika. Photograph reproduced courtesy of the European Pressphoto Agency

classical statues'. In February 2010 a high-circulation German magazine carried a cover showing the Venus de Milo, goddess of love, giving the finger, with the caption: 'Cheats of Europe?'.[13] This followed the Greek government admitting that it had falsified accounts of its financial situation. The statue – known in Greece as Aphrodite of Milos – was found in Greece but is now in the Louvre. Accompanying a message of Greeks as cheats with a piece of heritage they considered looted looked like a bad memory lapse. Greece hit back – reminding Germany, as on the front-sheet of the Greek newspaper *Eleftheros*, of Germany's post-World War II gains and never having paid full reparations for their damage. The image (in Figure 9.2) showed the Greek Goddess of Victory, Nike, atop Berlin's Victory Column (Siegessaüle) – but holding a swastika – in what was also an effective reminder of the centrality of Greek heritage within Germany, and articulation of Greece's contention that Germany is acting the bully according to disturbing historical precedent.[14] Far from being just a battle of images, the case reached into still activable and highly potent historical memories, showing that even in relation to a highly preoccupying crisis, heritage and memory were far from mere luxuries.

Likewise in the case of radical Islamic terrorism, itself supported by certain memories and heritage. As well as the loss of life that this terrorism has caused, it has also contributed to, and gained further sustenance from, generating Islamophobia – a lumping together of everything Islamic and even vaguely Middle Eastern, and linking it with threats of various kinds (Chapter 7).

History gets entangled in this in various ways. On the one hand, loose historical allusions serve to compound it further, such as, in US President George Bush's use of the term 'crusade' in his post 9/11 'War on Terror', with its first campaign initially called 'Operation Infinite Justice': labelling that rendered the attack as a Holy War and his actions as against Islam *tout court*.[15] At the same time, however, there has been a blossoming of attempts to enrich understanding of Islamic culture in ways that do not restrict or reduce this to religion. This has included an expansion in the number of exhibitions concerned with Islam in various European countries, which variously seek to challenge stereotypes by, for example, illustrating Islam's civilising heritage, its long presence and role within Europe, or highlighting the differentiation of the specific histories and memories of groups dubbed Islamic. Given the way that Islam is often made to operate as a symbolic 'other' to Europe, as we have seen in Chapters 7 and 8, expanding this further is another pressing memory task for Europe's future. Not doing so is a luxury Europe cannot afford.

Reflective and affective past presencing

The fact that past presencing is entangled in such a wide range of experiences, themselves part of a wider complex of practices and ideas, as we have seen in this book and partially outlined above, is the most compelling reason for the likely continuation of the memory phenomenon. Particularly evident from the many various cases discussed is that making the past present affords opportunities for reflection, especially for making comparisons – drawing analogies or identifying differences – between ways of life. Because this is often done with a sense of connection to the particular past involved – it is often not just 'any' past but somehow 'ours' – it is often affectively charged and semantically dense. Research on popular genealogy, for example, has reported the very emotional ways in which people may respond to learning of the lives of their ancestors – perhaps crying at the thought of the hardship that they endured (Cannell 2011). Involved here seems to be a notion that the lives of previous generations contributed to the success of later ones – they in some sense suffered for us and we are thus indebted to them. This idea can be extended more widely too, perhaps, to help further explain the remarkable rise of the heritage of trauma and suffering, with its emphasis on ordinary lives. On a collective scale, those whose lives are usually shown in this heritage can be seen as collective ancestors – people we might have been and are metaphorically indebted to because we were not in their place. Witnessing their suffering by visiting such sites is a form of tribute, the small sacrificial act of giving up time to undertake such witnessing is an acknowledgement of the enormous sacrifice that they made. Increasingly, though unevenly, these heritage forms – which offer greater potential for connection through this logic of debt and sacrifice – seem to be replacing the lone hero, especially the aristocratic leader on his pedestal (and, usually, horse). As new forms of heritage emerge, various earlier ones may be forgotten

or abandoned, though they or their ruins may still remain in the landscape, available for re-activation in the future. As such, the continued making of new heritage, and new forms of heritage, is accompanied too, though at a slower rate, by the demise of others, resulting in a greater overall diversification of heritage than at any point in the past.

The making of meaningful and affectively charged connections across time can also be seen in some aspects of changing forms of heritage display. While to some extent all such forms hold this potential, some do so more than others; and what is compelling in one period – the heroic monument or war memorial perhaps – may become less so in another. Currently, forms that Rosmarie Beier-de Haan describes as involved in *staging* rather than *representing* the past seem to be especially well designed to encourage senses of connection (2005, 2006; Macdonald 2009 139–40). In a consideration of changes in history museums, she suggests that the 1990s saw a shift from history to memory – by which she means less emphasis on presentation through either long chronologies or social categories (as in the 1970s tendency to use class or gender to frame exhibitions) and instead a use of strategies to elicit individual responses to topics. Sometimes this is effected through a personalisation of display – testimonies by eye-witnesses, perhaps, or being given an identity-card of a particular individual; and, at others, through art installations, which seem to allow more individualised and affective responses; or through strategies that involve the visitor becoming part of the exhibition, perhaps through having their responses beamed up onto screens within it. The very category of *memory* rather than history shifts the focus to the more subjective and experiential; and it allows for the acknowledgement of different perspectives and positions upon 'what happened'. Increasingly, it is the affective response that is most invited, as part, perhaps, of what Paul Virilio claims is a 'communism of public emotion that has recently, so discreetly, replaced the communism of public interest' (2007/2005: 86).

Even where strategies to encourage such affective response are not actively deployed, however, heritage offers opportunities for specific kinds of experiences. Material heritage, in forms such as museums or sites, as well as performances of intangible heritage, typically provides a temporally distinct experience, set apart from the everyday – even if the topic on display is everyday life. This is the 'condensed time' of heritage – time that is in effect marked as available for experience with some kind of depth or intensity; time that offers a different possible affect than the 'psychic numbing' that Jack Kugelmass suggests that many people fear is happening in the face of repeated exposure to events in the mass-media (1996). Typically, participating in heritage requires effort. Sometimes, this is extensive, as in the case of those involved in crafting historical reconstructions, as well as for those engaged in unraveling family connections over time. But even making a day trip to a former battlefield or a performance of traditional dance requires an effort of organisation and a full-body presence. This effort is part of what makes heritage. It is part of what gives it the capacity to 'sensualize history' (Kugelmass 1992: 401), making it different from engaging

with the past through other media such as books, television or the internet. And it is part of what makes it 'ours', even if we have little previous connection with the past made present. The act of witnessing, via heritage, makes it part of our lived experience. So too does the sensory and bodily engagement of the heritage experience – the sounds and smells, and sometimes feel and tastes, as well as sights, involved. Certainly, social media and virtual technologies can enhance and to some extent mimic this – and how they do so and the implications this has for the wider memory complex is another area for further research in future. In doing so, this will need to be mindful, too, of the specific mix of the individualised and the collective that characterises particular forms of past presencing. Visiting heritage, for example, is usually undertaken with friends or relatives. But even if it is not, other people are still part of the experience – watching how they behave, what gets the loudest applause, what is written in the visitors' book. We are made aware with the very act of participation in certain forms of past presencing of what we may share with others, including the very fact that we participate in that particular cultural form. This includes those who we do not know directly. We may also find just how much we may differ. All of this work of comparison and reflection takes place not only during the condensed time of heritage itself but also after the event too, in discussion with others – and, as memory, available for comparison, that is carried from one heritage experience to another. As the White Queen further explains to Alice: 'That's the effect of living backwards … it always makes one a little giddy at first … But there's one great advantage in it, that one's memory works both ways'.

Memory, heritage and the broader field of what I have called past presencing are likely to make us giddy for some time to come, partly because they are not only about the past but also about so much else – including the future. As we have seen, there are new challenges for memory and heritage today, some of which involve at least partial disassembling of parts of the existing European memory complex. How to do memory and heritage in ways that allow for greater transnational and cosmopolitan connections, as is already being attempted in heritage forms discussed in Chapters 7 and 8, is one of those challenges. Will this supplant existing ways of doing and experiencing heritage? From what we have seen here, especially in Chapter 8, this seems unlikely, though it may alter existing modes, sometimes in subtle as well as more overtly evident ways. This suggests a continuation of the memory phenomenon. In addition, new challenges will no doubt also emerge in Europe's memorylands; and there will also be ongoing need for renewal and reminding about the past and existing memories. This shows no evident signs of coming to an end. Unless the future stands still, it is hard to see how memory can either.