1

THE EUROPEAN MEMORY COMPLEX

Introduction

> The imperative of our epoch is ... to keep everything, to preserve every indicator of memory.
>
> Pierre Nora[1]

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

This book is, inevitably, an addition to the memory mountain; or, more specifically, to that part of it concerned with trying to understand the memory preoccupation itself. Its particular contribution is anthropological, and more specifically still it provides a perspective from anthropological research on

Europe. Central to an anthropological perspective is the attempt to understand assumptions made by people when they organise their worlds in the ways that they do. What is taken for granted when people feel compelled to act in certain ways? What assumptions inform senses of what is important? How are feelings bound up with particular as well as with more shared experiences? Are there alternative ways of seeing, doing and feeling – perhaps to be found among peoples in other parts of the world or in the less examined parts of Europe itself – that can unsettle our assumption that things must be done or felt in the ways that are more widespread or habitual?

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

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

Europe – there are. But they are not necessarily the most significant in the lives of European peoples. Rather than give them analytical priority just on account of their ancestry and age, my concern is to explore how they play out in relation to other parts of the memory complex.

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

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

The memory phenomenon

The more specific focus of this book is what has variously been called 'memory fever', 'memory mania', an 'obsession with memory', 'the memory craze', a 'remembrance epidemic', 'commemorative fever', 'the memory crisis', 'the memory industry', 'the memory boom', and a time of 'archive fever' and 'commemorative excess'.[2] Aspects of it have also been characterised as a 'heritage industry', 'heritage craze' or 'heritage crusade'.[3] These terms have been coined to characterise an increase in public attention to the past, especially its commemoration and preservation. While prefigured earlier in various ways, this increase is usually dated as gathering pace from the 1970s and escalating further towards the end of the twentieth century and into the twenty-first.[4] It includes phenomena such as those sketched in the first paragraph of this book above, and

others including the creation of new civic rituals to commemorate (sometimes long-) past events, arguments over which histories should be aired in the public sphere and how, popular genealogy, the creation of heritage products, such as traditional foods and the broadcasting of numerous different television programmes about the past ranging from series about archaeology, with names such as *Time Team,* to historical dramas.

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

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

The memory complex

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

The ways in which the term 'complex' is used in various disciplines can help, by analogy, to explain this further. A chemical complex is a substance that is 'formed by a combination of compounds' (COED); 'the formation of complexes', says the Encyclopaedia Britannica, 'has a strong effect on the behaviour of solutions'.[5] In Mathematics, complex numbers are made up of real and imaginary parts, the latter being used to help solve mathematical problems that cannot be solved with real numbers alone; and in Linguistics a complex sentence is one including subordinate clauses. What I want to draw out from these is the idea of the complex as consisting of non-exhaustive patterned combinations and relationships; and of complexes themselves gaining autonomous meanings, effects and possibilities for 'going on'.

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

Assemblage and complexity

My use of the notion of 'complex' is similar to that of 'assemblage' as it has come to be used in recent years in some social and cultural theorising.[6] Both

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

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

The point that complexity should not be seen as random or chaotic is important and is one reason for the fact that assemblage theory and complexity theory (which is referenced to many of the same authors and shares many of the same ideas)[7] have produced an extensive vocabulary of terms to try to identify and characterise processes and patterns. The natural sciences have provided particular inspiration here, complexity and assemblage theorising variously employing terms such as 'feedback', 'circulation', 'density', 'principles

of association', 'attractors; 'emergent properties' and the like. While these can be thought-provoking and illuminating in specific analyses – and I employ some below – I do not seek to use them in any extensive way here. This is primarily because the production of these more general characterisations and distinctions is not my ambition. Rather, I am interested in exploring the specific constellation of the memory phenomenon in Europe and the memory complex of which it is part. This requires, in my view, attention also to meso-level theorising, which can often illuminate particular formations and processes better than can a jump straight to broad ontological claims. In addition, my analysis gives more emphasis to human meaning-making, linguistic connotations and the like than is typically given the case in assemblage theory, though it does not necessarily rule these out.[8] In the chapters that follow, then, I only occasionally draw directly on the language of assemblage. This includes using the term 'assemblage' for specific constellations within the peculiar agglomeration of elements concerned with memory that is the overall focus of my investigation, and that I dub the memory complex. Nevertheless, there are other ways in which much of the research discussed here resonates with assemblage theory, including an emphasis on materiality, as discussed further below.

Methodology

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

My use of the term 'anthropology' needs some clarification here as not all of those who I discuss as 'anthropologists' would necessarily use this term themselves. Across Europe, as well as beyond it, there is some inconsistency in the ways in which 'anthropology' and related terms, such as 'ethnology' and 'ethnography', are used. Here, I do not include biological or physical anthropology; rather, my compass is what in the British tradition is usually called social anthropology and in North America is referred to as cultural anthropology. Although non-European societies were the main focus of these disciplines historically, this is no longer so. This is also the case in many but not all continental European traditions, in which there is often a distinction made

between 'anthropology' as referring to work outside Europe and ethnology to refer to that undertaken within, or sometimes more specifically still, the home nation-state. In Germany, for example, a distinction is institutionalised between *Völkerkunde,* focusing on peoples outside Europe, and *Volkskunde,* looking at those within. Today the names have sometimes changed, with *Sozial Anthropologie* sometimes being used in place of *Völkerkunde,* and *Ethnologie,* or sometimes more specifically, 'European Ethnology' (*Europäische Ethnologie)*, on research within Europe, though there is increasing overlap, represented in a greater use of the term 'cultural anthropology'.[9] As in many other continental European countries, German ethnology had and often still has a strong overlap with folklore, sometimes being indistinguishable from it. In using the term 'anthropology', then, I do so in catholic fashion, to include what might elsewhere be called 'ethnology' or equivalents in various languages. This does not mean, however, that I cover all of the various forms of 'anthropology' being conducted within Europe, and for the most part I do not include the more folkloric work. Rather, I make my arguments through selected examples of research that, while it may go under various labels, mostly adopts approaches consonant with those I outline in the rest of this section.

The research included here puts an emphasis on qualitative methods conducted within a *Verstehen* approach that aims to grasp participants' perspectives and experiences – an approach that goes beyond recording of voices and cultural collecting, typical of folklore as classically conceived.[10] It generally involves a commitment to considering social and cultural phenomena as 'total' or 'totalities' in a sense used by one of the founders of French ethnology, Marcel Mauss (1872–1950).[11] Although there is debate about his use of this term, one of the main ways in which he used it was to emphasise how what might initially appear as different aspects of social life or human experience might be interrelated. So, a social phenomenon – such as the gift or sacrifice – might cut across categories such as the economy or religion, and thus could not be properly understood if their analysis was restricted to these. Ethnology was valuable in his view precisely because it allowed for attention to the concrete and complexity that he saw as lacking in the reductionism and abstraction of the new discipline of sociology being propounded by Durkheim, his uncle (Hart 2007). Significantly, his view of the importance of 'totality' in this sense was informed by his study of diverse cultures, predominantly non-European, which also made him aware of the limitations of analysis that restricted itself to Western categories, as well as of the challenge to dominant assumptions that such studies could provide. Although Mauss' own research was conducted second-hand, through examining studies undertaken by others, other anthropologists have developed methods that allow for an ethnological grasping of 'totality' and potentially also for challenging of analytical categories.

These methods are usually called ethnographic and typically involve some kind of in-depth and fairly small-scale study, often over a lengthy time period.[12] Although participant-observation is sometimes regarded as synonymous with

ethnography, anthropologists may employ a wide range of specific methods, such as oral histories, semi-structured interviews, spatial mapping, photography, film-making and other visual and sensory methodologies, as well as textual analysis, and sometimes also surveys (e.g. of households). Rather than the application of a particular methodological toolkit, what characterises the anthropological approach is a commitment to trying to see and experience life-worlds from the point of view of those who live them and within the context of which they are part. This goes beyond simply recording 'native voices' but entails a rigorous commitment to trying to grasp the patterns of relations of which utterances, practices, feelings and so forth, are part; and what they may be linked with. This frequently involves or leads to reflexivity about categories of analysis and forms of knowledge production – including the role of scholarship itself.

The emphasis on the small-scale deserves note here too. This allows for attention to detail that can potentially disrupt more generalising accounts. In addition, it may also open up the opportunity to hear 'quiet voices' or see perspectives or recognise feelings that are easily overlooked, either because they are held by people with little access to forms of expression that reach a wide public or because the forms that the expression takes are not usually recognised by the academy. A smaller scale of research also allows for direct interaction by the researcher, an approach in which their person and own history may become part of the study, as we will see in some examples below. Furthermore, a smaller scale can make it easier to see the connections between aspects of life or the multi-dimensionality of practices in a way consonant with Mauss' notion of totality. This does not mean, however, that research need only look at 'small' topics or for connections between what has been directly examined within the specific empirical study. Here, the notion of 'totality' potentially causes problems if it is understood as indicating a bounded self-integrated system, as Durkheim theorised in his functional understanding of 'society'. While many anthropological studies up until about the 1960s, and in some cases since, have been undertaken in a functionalist framework, which in European anthropological research often meant that the village was taken as the functioning unit and 'natural' object of study, since then researchers have increasingly rejected this model and sought ways of exploring connections across and beyond boundaries, and finding ways to bring insights from their micro-perspectives to 'speak out'.[13] To do so they have often developed new approaches, as we will see in later chapters, while still retaining a commitment to concrete study of specific worlds, events or phenomena. As Regina Bendix argues in a discussion of the distinctive perspective offered by cultural anthropology on the 'big' topic of 'global heritage', for example, 'only such micro approaches, in fact, can properly reveal the local specificity of a global heritage regime' (2009: 255). Only such approaches can show what notions such as 'global heritage regime' might mean and how they might work in practice. The global is, after all, inevitably imagined and realised in particular, local, worlds – 'worlds' which might equally be UNESCO meetings or remote villages.[14]

The problem with memory

Although I have so far cast the topic of this book in terms of memory – memorylands, the memory phenomenon and the memory complex – I want in this section to add some reservations, warnings and clarifications about its use. I then provide a brief introduction to some of the many classifications of types of memory and remembering that scholars have employed, and also look at some other possible ways of framing the analysis. A major problem with memory as a category of analysis is its very ubiquity and capaciousness,[15] which is itself part of the memory phenomenon that this book explores. The fact that 'memory' can refer to a mental function or faculty (the act of remembering or ability to do so), and also to content (what is remembered) renders it widely applicable. This partly accounts for why it is used in numerous disciplines and areas of popular culture, ranging from concerns over false-memory syndrome to the technical capacity of digital storage, from neurological studies of everyday mnemonic capabilities to social investigation of collective remembering. While this book mainly addresses the last of these, it is important to note that these different concerns are not disconnected but may feed into, shape and sustain one another. Loss of cultural memory, for example, may be likened to Alzheimer's; forms of organising digital storage may be configured through cultural forms such as the filing cabinet (documents, files). The analogy between individual or personal recollection and social or cultural is pervasive and informs understanding of both – and, as such, needs itself to be given analytical attention.

Making such analogies is not itself new, individual memory almost always being conceptualised through cultural forms. In medieval Europe, for example, memory was often conceptualised as parchment, and, thus, as a medium capable of bearing imprints of experience or as a hive of bees or forest or – when properly trained – a library, thesaurus or storage room.[16] Prevalent metaphors may change – today computers are more likely analogies than parchment – and this plays into how memory is understood, undertaken and even researched.[17] Some analogies, for example, more readily support attempts to train the memory, or they regard it as springing surprises as cobwebs are swept from its dark recesses or as environmental stimuli spark involuntary firing of neural connections. Not only does the cultural provide metaphors for individual memory, however, there is also, according to Pierre Nora, 'an exact chronological coincidence' between a 'preoccupation with the individual psychology of remembering' and the rise of concern about the loss of social memory (1989: 15). He dates this to the end of the nineteenth century, and associates it especially with 'the disintegration of the rural world' (1989: 15). What we see with the vanishing of the pre-modern, he writes, is that 'memory appeared … at the core of psychological personality, with Freud; at the heart of literary autobiography, with Proust' (1989: 15). 'We owe to Freud and to Proust', he adds, 'those two intimate and yet universal sites of memory, the primal scene and the celebrated *petite madeleine*' (1989: 15). Since then, he argues, preoccupation with memory has only increased,

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

Individual and collective

Psychological and psychoanalytic concepts devised for individual memory that have been used in relation to collective or social memory, include 'trauma', 'the unconscious', 'repression', 'flash-bulb memories', 'semantic memory' and 'episodic remembering'. In popular accounts this use is generally seamless, with little apparent consideration of whether such terms might be appropriate, and this is sometimes the case too in academic work, though there is also careful and illuminating use (as we will see in subsequent chapters). The potential problem, however, is that the social and individual become conflated and it is assumed that collectives work in the same way that individual psychology is theorised as doing, e.g. that nations have an unconscious and that they may suffer psychological trauma from the effects of repressing memories.[18] Used loosely, such notions naturalise processes and leave exploration of what might actually be going on untouched. Furthermore, the individualised psychological model treats 'memory [as] a distinct phenomenon that can be studied in relative isolation from other mental functions' (Wertsch 2009: 122). Memory thus becomes understood as involving various relatively autonomous known processes rather than through its specific workings and possible connections of a Maussian 'total' kind.

As Michael Lambek argues, this also takes for granted a model of autonomous individuals as vessels of memory. Drawing on Mauss' notion of *personnage* – a role-related and intersubjectively constituted notion of personhood – and his ethnographic research on spirit possession in Madagascar to highlight alternatives to this model, he argues that in 'Western discourse' memory has been made a 'romanticized object' (2003: 210). By the latter – a term that he borrows from Hannah Arendt – he means a form of naturalisation, that turns a supposed quality ('Jewishness' is her example) into a 'thing', then taken for granted as, variously, explanation, property of subjects and object of investigation. This then, in turn, supports the assumption of autonomous individuals. As he notes, similar processes occur at collective level, the elision between individual and collective memory reinforcing an individuation of collectives through attribution of shared memory. In discussions of personal identity, memory is almost always a key theme, often being regarded as a kind of glue, holding identity together over time. As such, memory – as a body of recollection – can itself become an indicator of identity. This is a notion that works powerfully in the social domain and informs the centrality of memory

and heritage debates in the politics of recognition and identity. Implicated here too is the conceptualisation of memory as a possession – as something that we 'have' rather than 'do' (Lambek 1996); and this is reflected in the persistence of metaphors of memory as a treasure house, museum or archive. This in turn helps substantiate the notion of identities as individuated and 'possessive', a model that political theorist C.B. MacPherson (1962) argues had become an assumption amongst seventeenth-century English liberals and is 'not abandoned yet' (1962: 4). He describes this 'possessive individualism' as entailing a 'conception of the individual as essentially the proprietor of his own person or capacities … as an owner of himself' (1962: 3). This was notably and influentially articulated by John Locke, in his 'forensic' conception of 'the person', in which primacy was given to memory – 'consciousness of the past' – as an indicator of personal identity.[19] This same conception infuses that of the nation-state, which flowered within Western Europe in the eighteenth century and has spread across much of the world since.[20] Nations are thus conceptualised as possessive individuals, with heritage acting as the materialised rendition of their memory as property. In a self-supporting reverse move, 'having' – possessing – a distinctive heritage, memory and culture helps to instantiate and substantiate the nation (or other collective) 'as a living individual' (Handler 1988: 41). These cultural assumptions are interrelated and mutually reinforcing parts in Europe's memory complex.[21]

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

Theirs is a thoughtful proposition that works well for the explicit forms of commemoration with which they are concerned. It does not, however, capture the full range of practices and processes that are involved in the memory phenomenon and memory complex. While these all entail reference to the past in some form, they are not necessarily forms of remembrance in the sense of either commemorating or actively remembering a particular past. Indeed, some engagements with 'the past' may entail very little 'remembering' or even memory content at all. This is one reason why I have suggested 'past presencing' as a possibly preferable alternative means of framing investigation (Macdonald 2012). Not only does this allow for consideration of a broader range

of phenomena, without assuming either intentional recollection, or pre-given processes or known actors, it also avoids some of the problematic distinctions of which memory is part – especially that between history and memory. I return to it below, after consideration of various other distinctions and terms. I should note, however, that despite the shortcomings of 'memory', I continue to use it in this book because the phenomenon with which I am concerned is usually framed in this way, as is so much relevant debate.

Memory and history

In popular and also academic discourse, especially that of historians, memory is often defined through a distinction with history.[22] Like 'memory', the English word 'history' is ambiguous, referring both to the past – what happened – as well as to accounts of that past and study of it. This ambiguity supports a popular vision of historical scholarship as an objective enterprise of establishing the facts of what happened; and also of the past as a body of factual evidence. Memory, when opposed to this vision of history, is regarded as subjective and fallible, based on individual recollections rather than proper evidence verified through expert institutional practices and persons. While this opposition is prevalent in Europe today, it is increasingly – as part of the memory phenomenon – accompanied, and sometimes supplanted, by a reversed evaluation. This sees established history become suspect as the product of elites, who are said to mystify their interests under the misleading banner of value-free facts. Memory, meanwhile, is elevated to a status of greater 'honesty', and seen as relatively unmediated and transparent in its very subjectivity.[23]

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

> the difference between real memory – social and unviolated … and history, which is how our hopelessly forgetful modern societies, propelled by change, organize the past … Memory is life… History, on the other hand, is the reconstruction, always problematic and incomplete, of what is no longer.
>
> (1989: 8)

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

Drawing and maintaining a clear-cut distinction between history and memory can cause as many analytical problems as it solves, as many commentators have

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

Memory terminologies and alternatives

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

Collective, social, cultural … memory

The terms 'collective memory' and 'social memory' are used to differentiate from personal or individual memory and to refer instead to memories that are held by social groups and/or forms of remembering that are held in some kind of common. They are usually referenced to French sociologist Maurice Halbwachs (1877–1945), whose work in this field was posthumously published as *La Mémoire Collective* (1950).[26] His concern was to emphasise the importance of social groups in creating frameworks for remembering – for example, the role of the family in transmitting memory – and also the significance of shared memory for creating senses of collective solidarity. Halbwachs has been criticised for taking for granted the existence of stable social entities as the producers of memory, and for overstating the determining role of the collective memory so produced for individual remembering.[27] Most of those using the terms subsequently, however, do not adopt Halbwachs' position wholesale; and much productive work has been undertaken under these rubrics on questions such as how creating shared memories might be part of creating social entities (e.g. the nation), rather than the other way around, or investigating the various positions that individuals might adopt in relation to collective commemoration.

In my own use here I likewise use 'social memory' and 'collective memory' to refer to accounts or representations of the past that make some kind of claim to being shared rather than assuming that 'collective' means necessarily held by all. Another attractive alternative, however, is James E. Young's 'collected memory' (1993), employed in his study of memorials in order to theorise these as sites around which diverse memories may accumulate. Rather than directing attention to what is shared by participants in memory practices, a collected memory approach leaves open the question of whether those engaging in a practice necessarily attribute it with the same meanings.

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

Historical consciousness and past presencing

In order to avoid some of the problems of the history/memory distinction and to put emphasis firmly onto questions of *how* the past is conceptualised and represented, some researchers choose to frame their investigation in terms of 'historical consciousness', as we will see in later chapters. This draws attention to questions about matters such as the 'narrative structures' or 'temporal orientations' through which the past is apprehended.[28] Although work of this kind does not always assume that people will be aware of the forms that their historical thinking takes, the term 'historical consciousness' can be confusing in that it implies active awareness. Moreover, this *is* how it is used by some theorists. In Gadamer's classical discussion, for example, he is concerned to specify the development of a reflexive – historically conscious – relationship to history.[29] Rather differently, it is also often used in discussions of history education, sometimes in laments over the lack of historical knowledge ('historical awareness') of particular social groups (see Chapter 2). Another shortcoming of the term – and of most though not all research undertaken under its rubric – is that it directs attention to cognitive process rather than to more embodied modes of engaging with the past.

In suggesting 'past presencing' as a way of demarcating the field of study, my intention is to find a broad frame that allows for as much Maussian totalising as possible; and that allows for unconscious or embodied relationships with the past as well as more conceptual ones.[30] This aims to avoid pre-defining what is involved in a wide array of social and cultural engagements with the past. It also tries to avoid the dilemma of 'analytic double-take' (Macdonald 2012: 234), where those being studied use the same language as that being used to frame analysis. That is, by using a terminology that is not part of what Gable and Handler describe as 'native discourse of memory' (2011: 43), it seeks analytical leverage on the fact that terms such as 'memory' and 'history' are part of the 'memory phenomenon' under investigation. By so doing, it aims also to avoid the usual dualisms and connotations that infuse these debates. One charge against this way of framing the debate might be that it does not perform a theoretical refinement by narrowing down and making the field more precise.[31] It seems to me, however, that what is required at this stage in research is a broad recasting of the field that does not overly constrict its scope and that conceptual refinement – for example, exploring differentiations between specific processes – can then proceed more effectively. Another possible charge is that 'past presencing' is presentist: its concern is with how the past is related to at specified moments or stretches of time. In defining the field in this way, however, my intention is not to say that historical research should be conducted in this way – historians can continue about their business as they please! I make no assumptions that the only worth or interest of the past is in its relation or use in the present – the argument is simply for looking at this. Neither do I maintain that such an approach cannot be tackled historically. Although much anthropological research does involve direct study of ongoing action, not all does so and how the past was made present in the past is as fully valid a focus for attention as is 'past presencing' in the present. The analytical 'present' of study might well be the past – indeed, it is inevitably so, if only recent.

It should also be emphasised that 'past presencing' does not entail taking for granted what will be considered 'past' or 'present' in practice, neither indeed whether a distinction will operate between these; on the contrary, part of its point is to indicate the elision and indeterminacy that is so often involved, and the disruption of linear notions of past preceding present preceding future. Ghosts, monuments, and old furniture are some of the many means by which the past may inhabit the present – and the future – or perhaps that a continuous past may embrace present and future. While linguistically differentiating between past, present and future operates widely in Europe, and all its indigenous languages, Indo-European and not (e.g. Basque, Hungarian), have a past tense, there are nevertheless differences between languages in which grammatical tenses are deemed appropriate when (for example, German often uses the present tense where English would use past or future), as well as in the tenses themselves (for example, French has many different past tenses, making distinctions such as between repeated actions that used to occur and actions

that are completely finished in the past). Likewise, in social practice, though not necessarily mapping directly onto languages, there can be distinctions between kinds of pasts – variously related to as fully over, periodised, continuing or likely to return; as well as of presents and futures, and the relations between them – linear, cumulative, non-cumulative, progressive, regressive, reversible, irreversible, disconnected, cyclical, rhythmic, looping, spiralling and so forth.[32] Past-presencing, then, necessarily gives attention to temporality. Reinhart Koselleck's philosophical reflections on how 'time is historically enacted in humans as historical beings' suggests that the present is 'elusive' and constituted 'in the relationship between past and future' (2002: 111). Although the 'temporal dimension' that he calls 'space of experience' most closely maps onto what I am here calling 'past presencing' – namely, the framework 'out of which one acts, in which past things are present or can be remembered' (2002: 111) – this is tightly bound up with a more future-oriented form of temporality that he calls 'horizon of expectation'.[33] How we conceive the future has implications for how we conceive the present and the past – and vice versa. More importantly, as he argues, the relationship between the space of experience and the horizon of expectation may shift (and has shifted significantly in Europe at certain historical moments (Koselleck 2004/1979)), thus altering, for example, the significance that the past is accorded in anticipations of the future. The implications of past presencing for imagining futures is a concern that runs through many chapters that follow.

Heritage

Another way of framing the concerns of this book – and that is also part of 'native discourse' – is 'heritage'. Over the past decade heritage studies has blossomed as a lively forum for debate, moving from a predominant concern with questions of conservation to interest in the politics and, more recently, the phenomenology of heritage.[34] There is a good deal of overlap with what is also considered under the rubric of memory studies, though the connotations and framing differ to some extent. Where 'memory' entices social researchers into analogies with individual memory and the language of psychology and also prompts questions about veracity and transmission, 'heritage' directs attention to materiality, durability over time and value. In more conservative heritage approaches, this may centre on questions about how to identify the worth of different kinds of heritage and manage it accordingly; but in critical heritage study it leads to interrogation of why and how some things come to count as 'heritage' and the consequences that flow from this. Because much discussion of heritage has been concerned with material forms – monuments, buildings and the like – research conducted in its terms has contributed some sophisticated discussion of 'intangible heritage'. Indeed, the very term 'intangible heritage' – for practices that might previously have been called 'tradition' – speaks to this framing.[35]

It also speaks, however, to what Barbara Kirshenblatt-Gimblett calls the 'meta-cultural' status of heritage (2006) – the way in which once something is identified as 'heritage' it is inevitably altered. As she argues, this occurs in particular ways through 'metacultural operations' (2006: 162), such as conservation, listing and becoming part of the 'tourist gaze' (Urry 1990), which have multiple consequences for people and other things within its orbit and for its future. In like vein, Bernhard Tschofen points out that one 'banal but not self-evident' feature of heritage is that it 'can be visited' (2007: 26). Extending this, we can say that heritage turns the past into something visitable; and, as Tschofen contends, research should then consider the implications of heritage's *Präsenzeffekts* – the ways in which heritage makes the past's presence felt (2007: 29).[36] All of this contributes to making 'heritage' a productive focus of research. Heritage legislation, heritage management, heritage conventions, heritage tours, heritage sites and so on and so forth are thoroughly part of European memorylands, constituting an identifiable field of practice for investigation.

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

As a set of metacultural operations, heritage is increasingly global. At the same time, however, what is meant by 'heritage' – and the expectations that flow from it – does not necessarily map seamlessly onto the diverse contexts in which it is put to work, even within Europe. An excellent edited collection of cultural anthropological research on heritage is entitled *Prädikat 'Heritage' (Predicate 'Heritage')* (Hemme *et al.* 2007). By using the English word 'heritage' in their German title, the editors neatly point out that it is this, English-language, term – and its specific connotations – that is being globalised, and that it acts as a predicate by asserting the very existence of 'heritage', as well as asserting as 'heritage' whatever it is attached to. As they explain, 'heritage' does not have a precise equivalent in German; and neither does it in most other European languages.[37] In German, the usual term used in relation to heritage developments such as conservation and listing is *Denkmal* (e.g. *Denkmalschutz* for heritage conservation), which also means 'monument' and speaks to an emphasis on material and public heritage. By contrast, *patrimoine* in French and *patrimonio* in Spanish have as part of their etymological root the notion of 'country' and yet can apply to personal inheritance as well as collective.[38] While the inflections may be slight, they can have consequences for heritage practice, as discussed in Chapter 5 (with reference to the Scottish Gaelic term *dualchas)*. They highlight variations within the European memory complex – even while, at the same

time, the various conceptions may share at least some assumptions, as well as, perhaps, coming to resemble one another more closely as a consequence of predicate heritage.

Europe and others

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

Anthropology has often employed an opposition between Europe (sometimes glossed as 'the West') and other parts of the world in its analyses. Claude Lévi-Strauss's distinction between 'hot' and 'cold' societies, for example, characterises 'our' (European) societies as 'hot' in that time is conceived as linear, changing and unrepeatable; they are societies that 'have internalised their own historicity' (Gell 1992: 23).[39] 'Cold' societies, by contrast, conceive themselves as closed systems, and operate according to mythical, repeatable or cyclical temporality. Many commentators have been critical of this idea, mainly because it reifies an absolute distinction that they deem untenable.[40] Eric Wolf, for example, provides a robust dismissal of the supposition that any people have been left 'outside history' in his ironically entitled *Europe and the People without History* (1982). As Kirsten Hastrup (1992: 2) points out, however, Wolf's argument retains an idea of history as an especially European phenomenon in its depiction of how European expansion has long and insistently affected lives around the globe. More undermining of the distinction are examples of the historical thinking that Lévi-Strauss dubs 'hot' in other parts of the world – as John Davis provides in an article that is a neat riff on Wolf's: 'History and the people without Europe' (1992). Also disruptive of the absolute nature of the opposition are examples of alternative modes of conceptualising temporality and history – what Hastrup calls 'other histories' – within Europe. Many examples will follow later in this book but to just make the point here, and to emphasise that alternatives are not somehow 'not European', we might turn to an example provided by Marc Abélès in his study of one of the most modern central locations of Europe – the European Commission in Brussels. The predominant temporality there, he argues, is quite counter to the pervasive historicising so widely seen in Europe.

Instead, amidst a relentless sense of urgency, '"One goes ahead without looking back, as if one were driving without a rear-view mirror"', as one official said to him (2000: 32). In consequence 'Everything happens as if the Commission was not able to think about its own relation to history' (2000: 32) – a form of historical consciousness (or non-consciousness perhaps) that he sees as part of the Commission's lack of institutional self-awareness.

Despite critiques of such oppositions – provided by exceptions and post-colonial nervousness over making Europe special – they can nevertheless be 'good to think with', to borrow from Lévi-Strauss' phraseology (1963/1962). Marilyn Strathern's contrasts between Melanesian ways of doing and thinking and those she calls 'Euro-American' is a notable case-in-point; and has led to extensive productive discussion as well as criticism for much the same reasons as those raised in relation to Lévi-Strauss' hot and cold division.[41] Highlighting alterity, as Strathern does, can be particularly valuable as a means of making us aware of what we might readily take for granted – e.g. notions of persons as individual rather than dividual. In my own thinking about concepts such as identity and memorial practices, it was often cases where these are done very differently or not at all that provoked me to 'see' the taken-for-granted cultural patterns in my own field-sites. For example, the assumption that prized material products should be preserved is challenged by the assertion among the Igbo of Nigeria that the creativity of artists is only released as the physical art-works decay.[42] This means that the preservation of what might be called 'material heritage' should be avoided, thus undermining an assumption that material continuity needs to accompany remembering.

As we will see in the chapters that follow, however, we do not necessarily need to look outside Europe to find alternatives to the more widespread patterns that contribute to the fluid and multivalent European memory complex. These alternatives are thoroughly part of the reality of Europe today and it is to these, as well as the more frequently encountered patterns, that this book attends. As such, its intention is neither to affirm Europe, nor to either dissolve it into diversity or to reclaim it through the very idea of its diversity (as has been the attempt in European Union initiatives and slogans of 'Unity in Diversity', see McDonald 1996). 'Europe' here, then, is primarily a heuristic – and a fairly loose one at that – for exploration. This necessarily entails treating 'Europe' not as a self-evident category but as itself variously, and sometimes uncertainly or acrimoniously, defined and characterised. Even with reference to geography, what counts as Europe is unclear and contested: are Russia and Turkey part of Europe or not, for example? From my point of view, the anthropological task is not to adjudicate on such questions but to see these questions as part of what constitutes Europe and to explore the motives and contexts of the different positions taken. Chris Hann points out, for example, that the Urals 'were nominated for the role of boundary marker only in the middle of the eighteenth century, when Russian intellectuals were determined to prove that the Czarist empire, or at least its capital and historic core, belonged to Europe

rather than to Asia' (2012: 88). Framing his own account in terms of 'Eurasia', Hann identifies various continuities and shared histories across Europe and Asia, and presents these too as challenging any taken-for-granted unity of the former (and, presumably, also the latter, though this is not stated). He also notes, as do many other ethnographers working in Europe, that what 'Europe' means to its inhabitants can vary substantially. Susan Gal has observed, for example, that 'for educated Hungarians, as for most inhabitants of the continent, "Europe" is less a geographical region or unique civilisation than a symbolic counter of identity' (1991: 444). This remains the case, though, as Hann points out, in the post-Socialist era this negative, oppositional understanding of 'Europe' may also be accompanied by a very different, celebratory and enthusiastic 'rejoining' of Europe (2012: 98).

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

Preludes

This book is not a history of changing forms of memory and historiography in Europe – this would be a separate, fascinating, project. There are, however, certain shifts that have been discussed by historians that are a prelude to the current memory phenomenon. I have already noted the notion of possessive individualism, which, it has been argued, became widespread in Europe from the seventeenth century. This turned memory and the past – and awareness of the past – into crucial elements of identity, initially personal and then, especially from the late eighteenth century, national. Then, in a logic of inversion, that so

often seems to operate in the social sphere, a continuous memory or history could itself become a way of proclaiming distinctive, individuated entities. Moreover, in what we might call a logic of extension, which also operates widely, this became a model ever more widely applied – or 'pirated', as Benedict Anderson has nicely expressed it (1983: 66). This was especially so from the 1970s, with the development of what is often called 'identity politics', in which there was a flourishing of demands for recognition by groups of various kinds on the basis of their identities – usually ethnic but also of other kinds, such as sexuality. Seeking out shared memory and manifesting this in some form of heritage was a 'natural' implementation of the model.

The past as a foreign country?

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

Certainly, what the compendious *The Past is a Foreign Country* seems to illustrate above all is a remarkable *range* of ways of addressing the past; and perhaps he is swayed to overstate the case for difference on account of the tempting quotation from L.P. Hartley that provides his title: 'The past is a foreign country, they do things differently there' (quoted in Lowenthal 1985: xvi). Nevertheless, he does show the growth of an idea of the past as worth looking at not just for exemplars of the present but for the more detailed and varied content that

it could provide. Clearly, this is a kind of past that can be appropriated more readily to a model of distinctive histories possessed by distinctive nations. The past here is 'foreign' in that it may provide instances of practices that are no longer continued – such as stories and songs collected as part of the swathe of folkloristic collecting that swept Europe with the spread of the nation-state – and in that it can even set puzzles over why things were as they were. The past is separate and different from the present. But it is not incommensurable with it. Rather, it is seen as a precursor of particular presents and owners. Moreover, it is also increasingly understood as requiring investigation as a means not just of knowing what happened *then* but for understanding and demonstrating present day distinctiveness.

The new practices of conservation and rooting around in actual physical remnants of the past, of which Lowenthal provides ample documentation, show this well. Prior to the nineteenth century, even though Antiquity was widely admired, he explains, 'its physical remains were in the main neglected or destroyed' (1985: xvi). Only in the nineteenth century did archaeology grow as a popular practice and as a discipline.[44] So too did forms of preservation and restoration. According to Svetlana Boym:

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

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

The sciences of memory

The idea that the past provides clues to the present was also strengthened and expanded from the late nineteenth century by what Ian Hacking (1995) calls

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

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

There is much more that could be discussed as part of the prelude to the memory phenomenon within Europe. This includes *inter alia* the rise of mass production and consumption – proliferating new material forms and accompanying moral concerns about them; new forms of 'mechanical reproduction', as Walter Benjamin called them in 1955 (Benjamin 1992), playing into new concerns with the simulated, real and authentic; migration and urbanisation entangled with searches for community and roots; growing disenchantment with modernity and progress, meaning that the future could not be relied upon to provide the best answer; fissures covered over by the nation-state opening up, and becoming exacerbated by riffing on the compulsion to express distinctive identity in a politics of recognition; and the experience of mass warfare and destruction of human life – and accompanying mourning and memorialising – on a scale never previously encountered in Europe. Many of these will be addressed in the chapters that follow. In these, we turn to anthropological research to venture into what this too can tell us about the memory complex and the memory phenomenon in the memorylands of Europe.

The rest of this book

Memorylands divides roughly into two halves, the first of which introduces a range of anthropological perspectives and history of research on past presencing, together with methodological discussion. The second half, from Chapter 5, deals more directly with specific dimensions of the memory phenomenon.

The division is, however, far from absolute and there is discussion in the first half of topics, such as post-Socialist nostalgia, that are also part of the memory phenomenon – as indeed is much that is discussed throughout the book; and many topics introduced in the first half – including methodology, forms and media of narration and past presencing – are further developed in discussions in the second half.

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

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

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

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

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

Like the two preceding chapters, Chapter 7, *Transcultural Heritage,* has a central focus on cultural agencies involved in past presencing: here, especially at

monuments, public sculpture and museums. Given that these played significant roles in the nineteenth-century articulation of bounded, homogeneous identities, especially national identities, and associated histories and heritage, this chapter explores whether they are capable of addressing and even encouraging more fluid, multiple and transcultural memories and identities. The discussion here focuses especially upon the transcultural in relation to migration from outside Europe, and includes debates about heritage in relation to multiculturalism, citizenship, Islam and the veil as heritage. How far transcultural forms indicate a transformation in the nature of the European public spheres is explored through a number of innovative examples.

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

Culminatory narratives, ending in futurology, are a familiar strand in the European memory complex repertoire. The final chapter, *The Future of Memory – and Forgetting,* does not escape its cultural conventions … entirely.