TRANSNATIONAL HERITAGE IN THE MAKING

Strategies for Narrating Cultural Heritage as European in the Intergovernmental Initiative of the European Heritage Label

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The idea of a transnational cultural heritage has become topical in Europe because of the new EU heritage initiatives, such as the European Heritage Label scheme. Even though the scheme is administered at the European level, its implementation is transferred to heritage agents in the countries participating in the initiative. How do the heritage agents narrate the labeled heritage sites as European? Using the method of narrative analysis, this article identifies six key strategies of making sense of a European cultural heritage. Even though the scheme includes certain frameworks in which the heritage agents have to interpret and narrate the sites as European, it enables them to interpret the idea of Europe in their own way – and thus use their power to define a European identity.

Keywords: European Heritage Label, European identity, narration, nationalism, transnational cultural heritage

Since the 1980s culture has become an increasingly important domain on the EU's political agenda. A concrete result of this development is the establishment of various cultural initiatives and programs, which are governed by the EU but implemented at the local level. Besides strengthening cultural political aims, the EU has started to pay more and more attention to the cultural identity of its citizens and promotes their identification with Europe (Näss 2010; Stråth 2002; Shore 2000). In practice, discussions on culture and identity merge in the EU's cultural political rhetoric – a European identity or Europeanness is considered to be based on shared cultural roots and manifested through diverse cultural objects, sites, practices, and symbols.

In the current rhetoric of the EU's cultural policy, the common cultural heritage is given a particularly important role in the formation of a European identity. Several core EU documents, such as the Treaty of Lisbon, the European Agenda for Culture, and various decisions on cultural and civic programs, produce and foster the idea of a European identity by emphasizing the cultural heritage as a common layer of meanings shared by all Europeans (Lähdesmäki 2012). In the rhetoric of these documents, the cultural heritage in the EU member states is Europeanized – represented

as European and as a part of a common European culture, history, and legacy.

During the past two decades the EU has launched or jointly administered several initiatives, such as the Raphael community action program (1997–2000), the European Heritage Days (in cooperation with the Council of Europe since 1999), and the European Union Prize for Cultural Heritage (since 2002), which focus on fostering the cultural heritage in Europe. The European Heritage Label (EHL) is the EU's most recent cultural initiative in this domain. The EHL was launched as an intergovernmental cultural scheme in 2006, initiated by the French Minister of Culture and Communication and supported by the Spanish and Hungarian ministers. Its main aim was to identify and designate sites which "have played a key role in building and uniting Europe" and to promote "a European reading of these sites" instead of their national interpretation (EC 2010: 15). The ideological and political motive for the EHL scheme was to turn the national heritage into a shared transnational European heritage which would function as a basis for "our" (European) identity and feeling of belonging, as the intergovernmental declaration on the EHL indicates:

> We, the European Union Ministers for Culture participating in the European Heritage Label initiative: (---) Declare that our heritage in all its diversity is one of the most significant elements of our identity, our shared values and our principles. (---) Agree to promote the European nature of cultural assets and the sites which have shaped Europe's history, and to share and raise awareness of the wealth of European Heritage among its people. (Declaration on the initiative for a European Heritage Label 2007)

In 2007 the first series of sites (altogether 42, including, e.g., the Acropolis in Greece, the Cluny Abbey, and the house of Robert Schuman in France) were awarded with the label. The listings of possible EHL sites were first compiled at the national level by a committee of national heritage experts. The final decisions on the designations were made by the Heritage Committee of Europe, consisting of the Ministries of Culture and the European Commissioner for Culture or the latter's representatives. By 2011, 67 sites from 19 countries were awarded with the label. The countries that have participated in the intergovernmental scheme are: Belgium, Bulgaria, Cyprus, the Czech Republic, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Italy, Latvia, Lithuania, Malta, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, and Switzerland.

The first years of the scheme indicated that the initiative was difficult to effectively implement on an intergovernmental basis due to the lack of common coordination and possibilities for operational arrangements (EC 2010: 18–20; MacCoshan et al. 2009). The implementation of the intergovernmental initiative was criticized for the lack of clear criteria for the label and the diversity of interpretations of the "European dimension" and "European significance" in the participating countries (MacCoshan et al. 2009: 18). The scheme was, however, considered important by the European Parliament and the European Council, and in 2008 the European Council adopted conclusions that transformed the initiative into an official EU action. In 2013 the EU-level action was launched with a two-year transitional phase after which it will turn into a regular action. The sites already awarded with the label during the intergovernmental phase have to reapply for the label during 2014 according to the new scheme and its clarified regulations.

Even though the EHL scheme has been administered at the European or transnational level, its implementation – defining and narrating sites as European and as emblematic of a European identity and promoting them as such – was transferred to heritage agents in the countries participating in the initiative. The agents and organizations that have nominated the sites for the label differ greatly from each other because of the diverse nature

of the sites. In the case of museums or memorials, the agents represented their own institutions, such as museums or memorial foundations. In the case of broader heritage entities, such as city centers or larger archeological or environmental areas, the agents also included administrative authorities responsible for cultural matters in the city or region. The professional backgrounds of the agents were, thus, in the museum and heritage field, history, and cultural administration.

In this article[1] I explore the EHL initiative in its intergovernmental phase and investigate how "European reading" of the heritage sites was carried out within the framework of the scheme. The analysis in the article relies on a narrative approach which emphasizes narration as a social act and narratives as social products produced by people in different social, historical, and cultural contexts and positions (Czarniawska 2004). In the analysis narrating is perceived as an interpretive device through which people represent the world to both themselves and others. As Steph Lawler (2002: 242–243) points out, "narratives are central means with which people connect together past and present, self and other. They do so within the context of cultural narratives which delimit what can be said, what stories can be told, what will count as meaningful, and what will seem to be nonsensical." Thus, narratives are tools for empowering agencies and legitimizing cultural and social meanings. Even though narrative inquiry includes several different theoretical and methodological orientations, the analysis is based on the notion of the storied or narrativized nature of social interaction and reality – they are constructed and made sensible through processual and temporal narrative structures. Narratives have also been perceived as the key means through which people produce their identities (e.g., Ricoeur 1991); this also applies to collective identity processes such as the European project.

This investigation focuses on the local, regional, and national heritage agents and organizations and their narrative strategies and the rhetorical means used when interpreting and representing the heritage sites as European and as manifestations of a common European identity. In the article the different modes of argumentation in narrating the sites as European are called strategies in order to stress the political and ideological character of these modes. The term presumes that the eligible goal – in this case being European – can be achieved in several (even competing) ways, and that the use of a certain way – in this case a way of narrating a site as European – can be a strategic choice in order to achieve desirable ends with the available means (on the concept of strategy, see, e.g., Mckeown 2012; on narrative strategies, e.g., DuPlessis 1985; Bacchilega 1997; Vázques 2011). However, the rhetoric used in narrating Europeanness may be either intentional or unintentional, and certain types of narratives of Europeanness may result from both conscious and unconscious practices. The ideological and political motives of using the recognized strategies and rhetorical means are discussed in the final two sections of the article.

The research data consist of introductions to and descriptions of the 67 labeled sites on the official web pages of the intergovernmental EHL scheme (launched by the Spanish Ministry of Culture, which functioned as the secretariat of the scheme from 2008 to 2011) and 39 applications for the label available online. The introductions and descriptions of the sites are usually quotations or summaries of the application texts, particularly the responses to the key question in the application form which is: "How is this heritage site/object, which has played a key role in European history, emblematic of European identity?" In the form the applicants were advised to justify, on the basis of the selection criteria of the Heritage Committee of Europe, why the site should be given the EHL label. Besides having to demonstrate that they have stable management and administration structures as well as policies for improving and promoting the site and its artistic and cultural activities and that the site is rooted in existing international networks, the selection criteria expected the applicants to justify a "European and trans-

national dimension of the site," the "capacity of strengthening the European citizenship," and/or that the site in question played "a key role in understanding European history and culture" (The European Heritage Label, Rules of Procedure, Annex II 2007). Accordingly, such policy and preparatory documents of the intergovernmental initiative and the EU action were studied in order to understand the political and ideological bases of the EHL.

European Identity as Narrativization

In this article the conception of identity relies on its discursive and narrative nature. Following the views of Gerard Delanty and Chris Rumford (2005: 51), the role of language and the discursive and narrative point of departure are understood as being crucial in shaping identities. According to them, the fundamental basis of the conception of identity is in its processual and constructed nature: identities arise only in relation to social action. Discursive meaning-making processes and narrativization can be considered a form of social action in which diverse "mute" cultural phenomena are operationalized by language, turned into symbolic markers, functionalized as social practices, and related to certain social orders.

The concept of a European identity has been vibrantly discussed among scholars of European cultural processes (e.g., Kohli 2000; Stråth 2002; Delanty 2002; Herrmann & Brewer 2004; Bruter 2005; Pichler 2008; Antonsich 2008; Checkel & Katzenstein 2009; Risse 2010). As the discussions indicate, the idea of a European identity is profoundly complex and includes meanings which vary depending on the discursive situations in which the idea is being produced, defined, and used. In addition, the idea of a European identity is easily politicized at both national and European levels. The question about a European identity embodies both distinguishable, yet in several ways overlapping dimensions of the collective and the individual. Agents shaping the collective discourse on a European identity take a very prominent position on how identity crystallizes at the

individual level (Bee 2008). During the past decades, the European Commission has been an active agent in the construction of a European identity. Several civic and cultural initiatives of the EU – often formulated through long-term collaborative processes – have aimed at providing meanings for Europe, the EU, and a European identity for EU citizens (e.g., Bruter 2003; van Bruggen 2006). As the EHL scheme indicates, diverse local, regional, and national agents participate (or are "forced" to participate because attendance in the EU's civic and cultural initiatives obliges them to participate) in the meaning-making of Europe, the EU, and a European identity.

The cultural emphasis on the conception of a European identity has often been interpreted as a thick version of it, appealing to (real or imagined) shared features and qualities, while the thin version of a European identity refers to the ideas of constitutional patriotism and a cosmopolitan notion of a European identity (Beck & Grande 2007; Pichler 2008, 2009). The EU's cultural initiatives, such as the EHL, promote the thick notion of a European identity by adopting the ideas of a common culture and heritage as their fundamental elements. Cultural phenomena, collective symbols, historical narrations, and memories and material remnants of the past are affective matters and thus profoundly sensitive, albeit effective, instruments for political and ideological attempts to create a feeling of belonging, communality, and a common identity. The cultural phenomena, symbols, histories, and memories do not, however, turn into the elements of identity building just by themselves; they have to be given collective meanings to become resources for collective identities. Thus, discursive meaning-making processes and narrativization are integral constituents of the collective identity-building process.

Identities are often produced and manifested in order to distinguish oneself from "others" and to indicate one's belonging to a particular community. In this sense, the relation to the conception of a national culture or national identity is essential to the production of Europeanness.

The transforming and fluid relations of national and European identification have been much discussed (e.g., Herrmann & Brewer 2004; Risse 2010). On the one hand, a European identity can be perceived as being produced as a negation of or a reaction to a national or non-European identity. On the other hand, a European identity is perceived as complementary to the national, regional, and local identities of people living in Europe (Breakwell 2004; Risse 2006). The distinction of the different identities or the distinct layers of an identity, as well as the idea of a fusion or a merging of different identities, are discursively and narratively produced and operationalized in language. Particularly the complex, fluid, and unsettled conceptions of identities, such as a European identity, are discursive spaces within which their meanings are constantly and continuously negotiated. Thus, as Monica Sassatelli (2009: 14) has noticed, a European identity increasingly takes on a language of becoming, rather than that of a stable and monolithic being.

When a European identity is perceived as a discursive, narrative, and linguistic construction which is in an ongoing state of becoming (as is the case in this article), its production can be considered as being based on some narrative modes and models. These modes and models are being produced, e.g., by the media, politicians, and academia. One profoundly influential producer and establisher of certain narrative modes of defining a European identity is the EU's cultural policy rhetoric. It is at the same time a fundamental political dimension of the EU's policy rhetoric – certain modes and models of narrating a European identity are represented as natural, true, and correct and as modes which are expected to be followed at the national, regional, and local levels. Public narratives are powerful in structuring what can be said and, conversely, in foreclosing certain meanings (Lawler 2002: 252). In addition to the EU's policy rhetoric, national history writing and popular and public histories offer strong narrative modes and models for perceiving and representing a European identity, as the analysis indicates.

Strategies of Narrating Cultural Heritage as European in the EHL Scheme

The EHL applications and the descriptions of the labeled sites on the official web pages of the scheme relied on a thick understanding of a European identity: the heritage agents usually narrated it as a cultural identity based on a common history, shared cultural roots, and a specific mental state. Following the instructions of the EHL scheme, the underlying principle in the data was to represent the (previously) locally, regionally, or nationally recognized and interpreted sites, monuments, historical incidents, and persons as European. The attempts to Europeanize the local, regional, or national *loci memoriae* could be, e.g., expressed in the data as an opportunity to broaden the local, regional, or national significance of a heritage to the European level, and as a generous act of sharing a national heritage with the rest of the Europeans, as the following quotation from the German EHL application for the Reformation network indicates:

> The initiative is also the next public step in an approach which, as European 'Lieux de Mémoire', has already been widely discussed in an academic context, both the perspective of the formation of a European consciousness in the past, and in the hope of developing a clearer European identity in the future. This would appear to be an opportune time to create a network of German loci memoriae of the Reformation as a locus memoriae we can all share. (Sites of the Reformation network 2010: 1–2)

In addition to the Europeanization of local, regional, and national phenomena, the data included a reverse narrative principle in which the features and phenomena perceived as European were considered to be manifested in the local, regional, or national environment. The localization or nationalization of European phenomena was utilized in the data, e.g., by emphasizing the adaptation of "European" architectural or artistic movements and way of life into the local or na-

tional environment, as the following quotation from the Bulgarian EHL application for the city center of Rousse illustrates:

> All urban sites suggested for listing under the European Heritage Label Scheme belong to a group of sites in the central city zone. It presents not only the Rousse's unique atmosphere, but also demonstrates the successful integration of European cultural identity, architectural trends and lifestyle into the national tradition. (The historic and architectural ensemble of Rousse City Centre 2007: 5)

A closer analysis of the data brought to the fore six strategies of narrating the labeled sites as European. Identification of these strategies was based on the researcher's comparison between narrative patterns and meaning-making processes present in the data. In practice, the different narrative strategies were often merged or combined in the rhetoric of the EHL applications and the descriptions of the sites on the official web pages. All the strategies comprise more concrete rhetorical means through which the strategies are linguistically operationalized. Some of the strategies obey – and thus participate in promoting and strengthening – the narrative modes used by the EU in its policy rhetoric. Some other strategies follow the narrative modes traditionally used in national history writing or in more popular situations of making sense of the past. The strategies, the rhetorical means, the sources of narrative modes, and the notions on a European identity related to each strategy are summarized in Table 1.

Narrative Strategy of European-wide Interaction
One of the most common strategies of narrating the sites' Europeanness in the data was to emphasize the European-wide interaction of people and ideas that were perceived as characterizing the labeled site, its history, or the present condition. The strategy follows the EU's policy rhetoric used in diverse cultural and civic programs, which emphasizes the importance of fostering transna-

tional and cross-border cooperation, interaction, and dialog between the member states, regions, organizations, and individuals in Europe. In the data, a common rhetorical means of this strategy was to list the (current) European countries from where the artists, architects, or stylistic influences arrived at the site in question, as the Polish EHL application for the Cathedral of St. Wenceslas and St. Stanislaus illustrates:

> The European importance of Wawel Cathedral is confirmed not only by historical background but also by its artistic values. Many European architects and artists from Italy, Russia, France, Germany, Austria or Denmark attended the building and decorating of the Cathedral. One can recognize distinct signs of particular periods in which several artworks of great significance in European art were created. (Cathedral of St. Wenceslas and St. Stanislaus on Wawel Hill in Cracow 2007: 2)

Besides the broad involvement of artists, architects, and stylistic movements from different European countries, the Europeanness and the European significance of the sites were often narrated by using rhetorical means of emphasizing the European-wide influence or the broad distribution of the ideas or goods produced at the site. The description of the Belgium Raeren Pottery Museum on the EHL web pages illustrates this means:

> Today these objects are preserved not only in the place where they were produced, in the Raeren Pottery Museum, but also in the most important European museums (the Louvre, the MRAH in Brussels, the Victoria & Albert Museum in London, the Rijksmuseum in Amsterdam, and museums of decorative arts in Berlin, Vienna, Budapest, Frankfurt, Hamburg, Cologne, Munich, etc.). (EHL 2013a)

The EU's current political rhetoric stresses – in line with the official slogan of the EU – both unity

and diversity as the main features of a European cultural identity: European culture(s) are seen as being characterized both by shared cultural roots and as distinct cultural units. In the data, the narration of the sites' Europeanness often followed the idea of "unity in diversity" by utilizing a rhetorical means of emphasizing the site as a meeting point of diverse peoples, nations, and ethnic and religious groups. The former socialist countries typically emphasized their sites as meeting points of the East and the West, or the West and the Balkans. In the Southern European and Mediterranean countries the sites were often narrated as meeting points of Europe, Africa, and Asia, while the countries in Central Europe emphasized their sites as crossroads of Northern and Southern Europe. Europeanness was narrated in the data as a flourishing and culturally stimulating national and ethnic pluralism that originates from the distant past of the continent. In addition, many of the labeled sites narrated their Europeanness through being a confluence of mercantile routes, as the description of the Swiss Hospice of St. Gothard illustrates:

> The St. Gothard Pass and its emblematic Hospice have always formed a link between Northern and Southern Europe. Known to have been used since the 3rd century BCE, from the 13th century on it became the required route for merchants, with the conditions needed for regular traffic. The St. Gothard has become an emblem of modern European mobility and all its aspects. (EHL 2013b)

As the previous quotation indicates, the means of emphasizing the site as a meeting point of diverse people reflects the EU's current policy rhetoric on the free movement of people and goods. In the data, the "meeting" of different nations and ethnic groups was typically represented as a positive incident that generated a dynamic and creative atmosphere during the different historical phases of the site, even though the "meeting" would have included armed conflicts, combats, or con-quests of rival powers. The sites' violent history as a stage of continuous conquests by neighboring rulers could be softened in the data by narrating the history as an indication of the strategic significance of the site and the consequences of the conquests as the rich historical multilayeredness of the site. In general, in the strategy the notion of a European identity relied on the idea of more or less distinct national identities: distinct peoples and nations in Europe have their own historical experiences and trajectories which are, however, interactive and interdependent but still separated. European identity was narrated as an ensemble of the national identities in Europe.

Narrative Strategy of Cultural Grandeur

The rhetoric of popular and public history often praises and glorifies the most well-known heritage and touristic sites in Europe, and thus reproduces their role in the canon of important European monuments and architectural constructions. Bringing to the fore their grandeur and exclusiveness is a typical way to describe their significance. The strategy of cultural grandeur was often used in the data to justify the EHL sites' Europeanness. The strategy was operationalized through a rhetorical means of emphasizing the outstanding quality, beauty, or splendor of the sites, particularly in cases of palaces, castles, and churches.

In academia, historical artistic styles and architectural movements have also been perceived as emblematic features that penetrate the history and culture of Europe and transcend the particularism of national cultures (e.g., Delanty & Jones 2002: 453–454). In addition, the EU has utilized the idea of a common European architectural heritage in its attempts to create common EU symbols – the Euro banknote designs, for example, illustrate different architectural motifs associated with the history of Europe. In the data, the European dimension of the sites was often narrated by using the rhetorical means of emphasizing the exemplary character of the sites in relation to "European" architectural styles. Thus, for example, the Cluny Abbey in France was described as

"a leading disseminator of the Romanesque style and of Gregorian Reform" (EHL 2013c), and the Rundale Palace in Latvia as "a prime exponent of European Renaissance and Baroque culture" (EHL 2013d). In addition, the labeled sites included several monuments and museums of composers and artists. In the rhetoric of the data, references to traditional forms of high culture, such as opera, classical music, and fine art, were related to European cultural specificity. The strategy of narrating the sites' Europeanness through the strategy of cultural grandeur reflects the notion of the European identity as a supranational (high) cultural identity.

Narrative Strategy of Transnational Ideas
In the data, the labeled EHL sites were often narrated as European by bringing to the fore diverse transnational ideas represented as being derived from shared European values and societal principles. Emphasizing these ideas can be identified as a rhetorical means of defining the site as European. The most often repeated ideas in the data were: democracy, rights, and freedoms (such as individual and group rights and freedom of expression, speech, and association); coexistence of people, mutual respect, and equality between nations; and humanitarian spirit, solidarity, and peace. Referring to these ideas was used in the data as a justification for the European significance of the sites, as the following description of the mausoleum and birthplace of General Milan Rastislav Štefánik in Slovakia illustrates:

He was a man who influenced European politics with his outstanding diplomatic efforts, and whose ideas and actions entitle him to be considered the "first European". He believed that one day peace and harmony would finally reign among European nations, and called this "Europeanisation". Equally dedicated to his own country, his mausoleum contains not only his tomb but the monument erected in his memory. It is an exceptional monument of European grandeur and symbol of the love, rever-

ence and gratitude the Slovak and Czech people feel towards this extraordinary leader. (EHL 2013e)

The strategy reflects the EU's political rhetoric, which promotes the identified ideas as the fundamental European basis of the union. As, for example, the Treaty of Lisbon declares, it has been created by "drawing inspiration from the cultural, religious, and humanist inheritance of Europe, from which have developed the universal values of the inviolable and inalienable rights of the human person, freedom, democracy, equality, and the rule of law" and "desiring to deepen the solidarity between their peoples while respecting their history, their culture and their traditions" (Treaty of Lisbon 2008: article 1). As the treaty indicates, the EU's political rhetoric aims to outline the common values and mental background of Europe and to explain Europe as the home of democratic principles and a sense of justice. Thus, appealing to these values and societal ideas politicizes the narration of the Europeanness of the cultural heritage.

The data included several sites that were narrated as European by emphasizing ideas of entrepreneurship, worker mobility, and free trade. This rhetorical means was often utilized with more or less direct references to EU policy aims in the economic sector, as the following description of the industrial city of Zlin in the Czech Republic illustrates:

The most important point in terms of European identity is the Bat'a family's idea of a free market which, in the context of the period, was marked by tariffs and economic barriers, thus their project represented a major advance. To launch the project, they did not export the finished product but rather the whole industry complex, or in other words, the industrial cities created according to the Zlín model.

It also emphasises the idea of the free circulation of people, which is an equally important contribution to European identity. Young en-

trepreneurs came from all over the country and had an opportunity to attain their goals there, and in the future they would carry the ideas of Bat'a as their ambassadors around the world. (EHL 2013f)

The labeled sites comprise several churches, monasteries, and other religious buildings. Their European dimension was sometimes defined in the data by locating Christianity and Christian ethics as a common mental ground for a European identity. Christianity was narrated as a unifying history and a shared legacy of the continent that determines its current values, as the description of Saint Margaret's Church and Saint George's Church in Slovakia indicates:

> Both Saint Margaret's Church and Saint George's Church, which dates back to the 10th century, stand as testimony to a timeless and unifying phenomenon which has had a fundamental influence on the creation of modern day Europe: Christianity. (EHL 2013g)

Defining Christianity as a part of a common European heritage has been problematized in various political discussions. The modern "EU Europe" supported by the so-called European elites (Bruter 2005) relies on secular interpretations of a European identity and heritage, while the "conservative and nationalist Europe" attaches the Christian heritage and legacy to its idea of a European identity. The latter view has also been utilized in the political rhetoric of nationalist and populist strivings in several European countries willing to draw boundaries against Islam and Asian or African "cultures" (Risse 2010: 6). The struggles over formulating the preamble of the current EU's constitutional treaty indicated the contradictions between these two notions of Europe and a European identity. The suggested reference to God is not mentioned in the Treaty of Lisbon, but the "religious inheritance of Europe" is declared as a common foundation for the union in the endorsed version of the treaty. In general,

the emphasis on transnational ideas in narrating the EHL sites as European reflects the notion of a European identity as a value identity – an identity based on ethical and moral principles.

Narrative Strategy of Anticipation of European Integration

Even though the EU policy rhetoric emphasizes both unity and diversity as the fundamental elements of the union and its goals, attempts to produce a stronger cohesion in the union – be the approach cultural, civic, political, or economic – seem to dominate the political discourse of the EU. As the underlying political and ideological aim of the union, the idea of unity penetrates the rhetoric of all the major political documents, determining also the policy rhetoric of the EHL. According to the data, the EU's idea of and aim for multilevel cohesion and unity in Europe was often utilized as a narrative strategy to define the Europeanness of the heritage sites. The sites were introduced as materialized evidence of historical strivings to create unity and cohesion between different nations, states, regions, and ethnic and religious groups in Europe. A common rhetorical means in this strategy was to narrate the labeled sites as historical anticipations of EU integration. In the data, the historical incidents, trajectories, and aims of former rulers were often described by identifying similarities between them and the current political and social conditions of the union, as the following quotation from the Spanish EHL application for the Monastery of San Jeronimo de Yuste illustrates:

> The Monastery of Yuste embraces a number of different characteristics relating to its European vocation. First of all, the Europe that Charles V yearned for and was on the verge of achieving, is very much in line with the values of western culture. His legacy provides the frame of reference by which to comprehend our shared history the feeling of spirituality which goes hand-in-hand with a way of viewing the world. Four-hundred years later, this legacy

remains intact in Yuste and has been realised through a series of advances such as the ECSC, the Treaty of Rome, the European Economic Community and the European Union. A veritable outpouring of responses to the dream that Charles V had when he relinquished the throne. (Monastery of San Jeronimo de Yuste 2007: 2)

The connection between history and present-day social and cultural conditions could also be brought to the fore in the data by interpreting similarities between the mental atmosphere of the past before the rise of the nation-states and the current social and cultural reality in Europe characterized by the post-national climate. The phases of history when national sentiments and identities did not yet determine people's feelings of belonging were compared to the people's (assumed) feelings in today's Europe. Similarities between people's past and current mobility and the flexibility of cultural and economic migratory flows could also be used as a rhetorical means to justify the EHL sites' Europeanness, as the following quotation from the Spanish EHL application for the Archive of the Crown of Aragon indicates:

The ACA's documentary collections and the very existence of the Cultural Centre, go back to the origins of Europe, to a time in history when the region was taking shape from a political and culture point of view. This context, when national identities were not yet fully formed (the time when the Archive of the Crown of Aragon was instituted whose history is traced at this Centre), is strikingly similar to that of today because cultural and economic migratory flows between European countries during the Full and Lower Middle Ages was much more flexible than during later centuries thus reinforcing a sense of belonging to Europe. (Archive of the Crown of Aragon 2007: 14)

Besides narrating the historical incidents and heritage sites as predecessors of European integration in the twentieth century, some sites utilized a more straightforward rhetorical means of narrating the site as a part of the history of the EU. In this means the building of the EU and of Europe was often paralleled, as the description of Robert Schuman's House in France illustrates:

In 1924 Robert Schuman, considered one of the "fathers of Europe", bought a house in Scy-Chazelles, on the outskirts of Metz. This house now has great symbolic value for the history of Europe and is the home of the Robert Schuman European Centre, which honours his memory while organising cultural and educational activities publicising his work and the way in which Europe was built and continues to develop. (EHL 2013h)

In the strategy of anticipation of European integration, the notion of a European identity parallels the political EU identity which emphasizes the union, its integration policies, and EU citizenship as common ground for a feeling of belonging. This may have a practical background motive: in order to be awarded with an EU-related initiative, the local, regional, and national agents may have sought to interpret the Europeanness of the sites in relation to the EU's core policies and the building of the EU.

Narrative Strategy of Self-Evidence
The ideological starting point of the EHL scheme is in the existence of a shared European cultural heritage and a common European identity for which the heritage functions as a building resource. In the data, the existence of a transnational heritage and a European identity were not questioned or problematized – on the contrary, they were often perceived as *a priori* entities. The *a priori* nature of a European identity could be utilized in narrating and justifying the Europeanness of the EHL sites. The sites were often simply introduced as European heritage and as indications of a European identity without more analytical or explanatory arguments. According to the logic of this narrative strategy, for example,

the archeological site of Kourion in Cyprus could be narrated as "by definition a European monument" (Kourion 2007: 3), and the historical past of the Szigetvár Castle in Hungary as "known all over Europe" (Szigetvár Castle 2009: 4). In this narrative strategy, the Europeanness of the sites relied on the receivers' knowledge of history and culture and their ability to locate the sites in the European framework. When the sites were just declared European, their justification as such was difficult to deny – inability to perceive the site's Europeanness would have meant that the receiver was not familiar with European history and cultural and social phenomena.

In popular and public histories, antiquity and pre-historical and ancient archeological sites in particular are often introduced as having European significance and carrying a European historical and cultural legacy by simply existing and surviving through time. In the data, the sites with a long history were often automatically considered as European and as cradles of civilization in Europe. The further back the history of the sites went, the more obvious their nature as a common heritage and shared legacy became.

Strategy of Elevation of the Nation
Even though the focus of the EHL scheme is on the European dimension of the cultural heritage, a common approach to the labeled sites in the data was to view and discuss them within the national framework – as a part of national history, national culture, and crucial moments of the nation-building processes. For example, the Krakow Cathedral in Poland was described on the web pages of the scheme as "a great protagonist of Polish history" and the Szigetvar Castle in Hungary was emphasized in the EHL application as "a national symbol" related to the country's heroic national history, as the following quotations indicate:

This cathedral is inextricably linked to the history of the Polish nation, both in times of splendour and in times of adversity. As a great

protagonist of Polish history, it was here that the Great Dukes and Kings of Poland were crowned; it was also the Royal Vault from the 11th to 18th century. (EHL 2013k)

The castle is a national symbol of tragic perseverance against the invading Turkish armies, which substantially outnumbered the defending Hungarian forces. In 1566, when it was no longer possible to continue to defend the castle, led by the Croatian-born Miklós Zrínyi, the defending battlers "dashed out" of the castle only to meet their destiny in the heroic assault they launched on the Turks. This act of heroism was later on many times commemorated both in Croatian and Hungarian literature as well as in several works of fine art. (Szigetvar Castle 2007: 2)

Rather than Europeanizing the national or nationalizing the European, many of the EHL applications and descriptions of the sites on the official web pages sought to elevate the nation and various national issues related to the sites in question. For example, the works of Lithuanian artist Milkalojus Konstantinas Ciurlionis were described on the web pages of the EHL scheme as follows:

Milkalojus Konstantinas Ciurlionis (1875–1911) born in Pustelnik (Marki) close to Varsovia was a painter and composer and is broadly held to be the most famous Lithuanian artist. (---) The majority of his paintings are housed at the M. K. Ciurlionis National Art Museum in Kaunas, Lithuania. His works have had a profound influence on modern Lithuanian culture. So important is his work that an asteroid, the 2420 Ciurlionis, was named after him. (EHL 2013j)

The narrative modes in the texts reflected national history writing. The texts emphasized the particularity of the nation or nation-state and its historical trajectories, achievements, and significance among other nations and nation-states in Europe. On the one hand, this kind of narra-

tive strategy can be perceived as dismissing the European dimension due to its main interest in national-level issues. On the other hand, it can be perceived as a special mode of narrating and understanding Europeanness – a mode which relies on the idea of the Europe of nations, a combination of different nation-states with their own national identities, histories, cultural features, and heritage sites. In the framework of this narrative strategy, awarding nationally important sites with the EHL could be interpreted as official recognition of the significance of the nation and the national cultural and historical particularities in relation to other nations in Europe.

The strategy of elevating the nation was used particularly in relation to sites in the former socialist countries, such as Hungary, Bulgaria, Slovakia, Lithuania, and Poland. Besides nationally important buildings in Bulgaria and the Czech Republic, the labeled sites included memorials of national heroes, as the EHL application for the Vassil Levski Memorial Complex in Bulgaria indicates:

Vassil Levski, born Vassil Ivanov Kunchev (July 18th 1837–February 19th 1873), was a Bulgarian revolutionary, ideologist, strategist and theoretician of the Bulgarian national revolution and leader of the struggle for liberation from Ottoman rule. Due to his major significance for the liberation of Bulgaria, Vassil Levski is hailed as a national hero and often referred to as "The Apostle of Freedom" by the Bulgarian people. He is one of the most significant political men of the 19th century. ("Vassil Levski" Memorial Complex 2007: 1)

In fact, descriptions of the sites in the data could even focus on fostering the national identity as a justification for the label, as the following quotation from the EHL application for the Reformed College and the Great Church in Debrecen, Hungary, illustrates:

The Great Church is also an active player in the organisation of religious world congresses,

and has served as the venue of the meeting of Hungarian minority Reformed Churches from the neighbouring countries on many occasions. These meetings are attended not only by Hungarians living in the Carpathian Basin but also by Reformed Hungarians living in Europe, and what is more, by several hundred visitors from overseas countries. These meetings evidence the diversity of the roles the Great Church plays in uniting different Hungarian communities all over and in facilitating the preservation of their Hungarian identity. (The Reformed College and the Great Church in Debrecen 2007: 6)

The paradoxical rhetorical means of narrating the "European dimension" of the sites by emphasizing their role in the national identity can also be understood as a reflection of the ideology of diversity present within current EU policy. Justifying the European dimension of the EHL sites by bringing to the fore the national identity relies on a nationalist interpretation of the EU's policy rhetoric which, in addition to unity, emphasizes the importance of fostering multilevel diversity in Europe. Thus, in this framework, the nurturing of national cultures and identities can be interpreted as the promotion of cultural diversity in Europe.

Narration of Cultural Heritage as Rethinking Europeanness

Heritage as an object, a concept, and a social practice inevitably includes a political dimension, and it is thus easily instrumentalized for use in diverse ideological and political projects. The idea of heritage is inseparable from the emergence of national identities and cultures and the development of the nation-state (Hobsbawm 1983: 6–7; Ashworth, Graham & Tunbridge 2005: 26–31; Mitchell 2001; Peckham 2003; Risse 2003). Many of the institutions through which heritage is still currently promoted and administered in European societies have played a crucial role in the nation-building processes. Can the idea of a heritage be transformed to the transnational European level? The EU's heritage politics has its

ideological basis in the pan-Europeanist idea of a transnational heritage that transcends national and regional memory and history. As in the case of Unesco and its universalistic reading of history (Starzmann 2008; Kirshenblatt-Gimblett 2006; Di Cesari 2010), the rhetoric of the EU's heritage politics elevates the categories of ownership, access, and inheritance to transnational values, while the heritage sites become a "common good" belonging to all Europeans. As Nic Craith (2012: 19) has pointed out, despite the constant affirmation of a common European heritage, the notions of it lack conceptual integrity and vary with the location and the occasion. The EHL scheme is the EU's political attempt to produce transnational *lieux de mémoire* in a sense of Pierre Nora (1996) – institutionalized and materialized places and phenomena which (aim to) function on a European scale as symbolic elements of self-understanding and the collective memory of a community.

In academic discussions, scholars have had contradicting views on whether a transnational European heritage can eventually exist and if so, what might be its common ground (see, e.g., Ashworth & Larkham 1994). Some scholars have asked whether a common European cultural dimension that is not based on "a mere sum of national icons" (Monica Sassatelli 2006: 29) could even exist. Some others, such as Gerard Delanty (2009: 37), have questioned the possibility of common European commemoration and heritage practices due to the lack of a coherent "European people" – which is the main difference between Europe and its nations. As several scholars have pointed out, instead of supplanting national or state identities, the EU's attempts at cultural Europeanization have mobilized domestic resistance and opposition (Checkel & Katzenstein 2009; Jones & Subotic 2011: 542). The national emphasis in the EHL applications can be interpreted as reflecting these sentiments and thus as being domestic resistance inside the EHL agenda towards the Europeanization of culture.

Some scholars have found possible common ground for a European identity and transnational heritage in urbanity (Sassatelli 2009), European cities and their historical environment (Ashworth & Graham 1997), and the architectural styles and movements in Europe (Delanty & Jones 2002). The selection of EHL sites seems to support these urban approaches: most of the labeled sites are historical architectural monuments located in former or present-day cities. As Gerard Delanty (2002) has suggested, a common European identity could be based on a common "historical memory" which is related to Europe in a broader sense. There are incidents within European history that are not only national, but European, such as diverse religious conflicts, class-based confrontations, and wars that have had an impact across Europe. The conflicts and their traumas and reconciliations could function as a shared history in Europe and as a base for sentiments of communality. During recent years, several scholars have recognized a new European culture of apologies, mourning, and collective guilt for past war crimes and collective acts of violence (Delanty & Rumford 2005: 98; Cunningham 1999). Even though the applications and descriptions of the labeled EHL sites brought to the fore losses and terrors of the twentieth century wars in Europe, only two sites – the Franja Partisan Hospital and the Memorial Church of the Holy Spirit, both in Slovenia – focused more explicitly on remembering the victims of WWI and WWII.

Different nationalities may interpret "Europeanness" or "European" very differently (Risse 2003: 77; Jones & Subotic 2011: 254). For some nationalities a European identity is based on civic or political understanding, while some others emphasize its cultural notion (Bruter 2005). Moreover, several cultural value surveys among Europeans have indicated that the definitions of national heritage and European heritage vary considerably from one country to another (*Eurobarometer* 2007; Ipsos 2007). The EHL applications also revealed the different ways the idea and the concept of heritage are understood in different countries. For example, Latvia's applications emphasized authenticity and originality as core values of heritage, while in

Cyprus' applications historical multilayeredness functioned as the basis for the concept. Similarly, the idea of a transnational heritage got profoundly diverse emphases in different countries. In Spanish applications, for example, the sites were mainly discussed with reference to Europe and Europeanness, while in Hungary, national and nationalist discourse dominated the rhetoric.

In writing the history of Europe, there has been a noticeable bias in favor of Western and Southern Europe compared to Northern and Eastern Europe (Mälksoo 2009: 673). The EU's eastern expansions in 2004 and 2007 have forced the EU to face new memory regimes, which are forcefully entering the discourse competition taking place in the European public sphere. Due to the rearrangement of EU geography, the experiences of crimes of Communist regimes and the restriction of freedoms under socialist rule broaden or are expected to broaden the common narration of the recent history of Europe (Onken 2007: 30). The attempts of the Eastern and Central European countries to bring their mnemonic culture into the common European historical consciousness challenge the long-term tendency of the Western core of the EU to act as a model for the whole of Europe (Mälksoo 2009: 673). Culture has become one of the crucial arenas of political struggle in the countries' attempts to become European and narrate their belonging to Europe. The analysis indicates that the former socialist countries used the EHL scheme as an instrument to introduce their historical phases, cultural characteristics, arts, national heroes, and cities and raise their significance on the European scale. Seven countries suggested the label for persons, and five of these countries were former socialist countries. Among the labeled sites there are seven cities or city centers, six of which are located in former socialist countries. In the application texts these countries often sought to raise the awareness and significance of their regions, as the case of Riga illustrates: "The history of Riga, the Latvian capital, is the history of an important region of Europe: the Baltic territories" (EHL 2013i).

Conclusions

The foundations of European integration policies are in cooperation in the core areas of the EU, that is, economy and trade. The economic aspect is intertwined with EU policy discourses in various policy domains including culture and heritage-making. Cultural integration is, thus, grounded in political and economic integration in the EU. EU heritage politics is closely intertwined with economic aims: boosting cultural tourism, strengthening cultural industries, and enabling regional development. During the past couple of decades the EU has, however, attempted to legitimize itself as a cultural entity. As Cris Shore (1993: 785–786) has noted, an emphasis of the EU as a humanistic enterprise based on various social virtues and common cultural roots and identity can be perceived as having functional utility: it is a tool for promoting the EU's political legitimacy as well as attempts to bring the different member states together. The fundamental utility of this emphasis is in its affective nature: it appeals to the people's feelings of belonging, cultural and social attachments, communality, and collective values, and thus aims to justify the promotion of cultural integration in the EU. Along with this emphasis, heritage has become an important political arena in the EU's policy discourses.

The EHL scheme functions as one of the EU's ideological devices for creating and implementing a European-wide identity and heritage politics. As a political tool, the EHL scheme obeys one of the EU's fundamental principles of governance: it mingles the top-down and bottom-up dynamics between the EU and the local agents. This form of governance is also used in other EU actions and programs, such as the European Capital of Culture designation (Sassatelli 2006: 30). Through this kind of principle of governance the local agents are committed to building a common European identity and the EU as a cultural project. As indicated, the EHL scheme directs and instructs the local-, regional-, and national-level heritage agents to narrate them-

selves as European and thus participate in the production of a common European heritage, seemingly on their own initiative. The narrative modes of defining European and a European identity that are emphasized and promoted in the EU policy rhetoric were often repeated by the local, regional, and national agents. It signifies the powerful position of the EU in the European identity project.

However, the ideological and political agenda of the EHL scheme is not utilized only at the EU level; the scheme has taken advantage of the local, regional, and national levels to raise European or international awareness and the publicity of the heritage sites, attract domestic and international tourists, and promote the sites' possibilities to receive European and national funding, etc. The advantages of the label for the tourism industry undoubtedly motivate the local and national agents to implement the scheme. In general, the EHL scheme functions at the local, regional, and national levels as an instrument in the politics of European significance. Even though the EHL scheme includes certain frameworks in which the local, regional, and national agents have to interpret and narrate the sites as European, the scheme enables the agents to interpret the idea of Europe and Europeanness in their own way – and thus use their narrative power to define a European identity. This power was used, for example, to nationalize the European agenda of the EHL scheme – particularly in the former socialist countries – as the analysis of the article indicates. The empowering nature of narratives explains the relative ineffectiveness of European heritage-making as an integrative tool in Europe; the European agenda of the scheme could narrow to a national agenda. Transnational heritage policies, such as the EHL scheme and the Unesco World Heritage Listing, do not eventually transfer the power over heritage-making to the transnational or international heritage bodies. As in the case of the EHL scheme, the Unesco World Heritage listing is based on the national heritage agents and states, who imple-

ment the heritage policies on the national level (Bendix, Eggert & Peselmann 2012). As Chiara Bortolotto (2012: 277) has noticed, each state translates key terms of the Unesco Convention in different ways, resulting in "domestication of global standards". A similar practice takes place within the EHL scheme.

During the past two decades academic discussions have emphasized the idea of a "Europe of regions" to describe the phenomena where "the 'European' is becoming increasingly 'localized', and simultaneously, the 'local' is clearly being 'Europeanized'" (Johler 2002: 9). In this process, nations and nationalities have been predicted to lose their previous position while regions are considered to be gaining new importance. However, some scholars have noticed that the phrase has eventually been much more a tool of governance "from above" than a tool for regionalism "from below" (Paasi 2009: 478). The analysis of the EHL scheme indicates that Europe is still mainly interpreted and understood as the Europe of nations. The distinct nations and nation-states with their particular national identities, cultures, and histories are perceived as the key players in the formation of Europe and its identity.

The analysis of the EHL applications and the descriptions of the labeled sites on the official web pages of the scheme brought to the fore six strategies of narrating the sites as European. The change of the scheme from an intergovernmental initiative into an EU action with a unified administration and reformulated selection criteria and rules may influence the strategies of narrating European cultural heritage within the framework of the scheme in the future. The narratives of Europeanness in different countries reflect the constant social, cultural, economic, and political transformations in Europe, and are thus fluid and processual. Due to the processual nature of the narratives, the European cultural heritage is constantly in the making and a European identity in a state of becoming.

Table 1: Strategies of narrating designated EHL sites (2007–2011) as European and the rhetorical means, the sources of narrative modes, and the notions of a European identity related to each strategy.

Strategies of narrating the EHL sites as European	Rhetorical means used in the narratives	Sources of narrative modes	Notions of a European identity
Strategy of European-wide interaction	• listing the European countries from where the artists, architects, or stylistic influences have arrived • emphasizing the sites' European-wide influence or distribution of the ideas or goods produced at the site • emphasizing the site as a meeting point for diverse people	EU rhetoric	consists of distinct but interactive national identities
Strategy of cultural grandeur	• emphasizing the outstanding quality, beauty, or splendor of the site • emphasizing the exemplary character of the site in relation to "European" architectural styles • referring to traditional forms of high culture	popular history	supra-national (high) cultural identity
Strategy of transnational ideas	• democracy, rights, and freedoms • coexistence of people, mutual respect, and equality between nations • humanitarian spirit, solidarity, and peace • entrepreneurship, mobility of workers, and free trade • Christianity	EU rhetoric	value identity
Strategy of anticipation of European integration	• emphasizing the site as historically anticipating the integration development of the EU • emphasizing the similarities between pre-national and post-national feelings of belonging • emphasizing the similarities between past and current mobility of people and migratory flows • emphasizing the site as a part of the history of the building of the EU	EU rhetoric	political EU identity
Strategy of self-evidence	• stating the site as European heritage and as reflecting a European identity • justifying the site's significance by its long history	popular history	*a priori* identity
Strategy of elevation of the nation	• emphasizing the particularity of the nation or nation-state and its achievements and significance among other nations in Europe • emphasizing the fostering of national cultures and identities as fostering of cultural diversity in Europe	national history	consists of distinct national identities

Note

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