RECONFIGURING TRADITION(S) IN EUROPE
An Introduction to the Special Issue

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"Tradition" has been a key concept and object of European ethnology from the foundation of the discipline all the way to intangible cultural heritage policies today. A focus has been given to the cultural and social circulations and permutations affecting traditional facts and has shown the plasticity of "traditions" to (ever-)changing social conditions. Understood as "uses of the past", these mainly political and sociological understandings of what "tradition" means today need to be complemented with a view on the emotional aspects of this peculiarly human way of imagining and experiencing the world. This text introduces three notions which highlight the experiential dimension of tradition: re-enchantment, ritualization, and heritage-making. We hope to forge new paths towards the exploration of all things "traditional" and their cultural dynamics.

Keywords: tradition, ethnology, ritual, heritage, cultural change

How are magic and supernatural powers expressed through "traditional" practices experienced in the public sphere? How can the ritualization of a practice or a craft interweave with its commodification or bureaucratization? What place do experiences and feelings of individuals have in the construction and expression of identities and cultural common ground? Such questions are linked to a central and crucial object of ethnological and anthropological investigation within European contexts, one which has contributed to framing – with more or less success – the scope and epistemologies of our disciplines: tradition.

"Tradition" and the Traditional in European Ethnology

"Tradition" has been a key concept and object of European ethnology from the foundation of the discipline all the way to intangible cultural heritage policies today.[1] As a polysemic notion, "tradition" can be associated, and has in fact been associated, with almost everything in the realm of culture: nation, identity, material culture, rituals, individual and family practices, museums, territory and locality, history and representations of the past, social order, politics, philosophy, and more. European ethnology has often, but of course far from exclusively,

focused on "popular" traditions, that is those cultural manifestations repeatedly transmitted and enacted (or thought to have been repeatedly transmitted and enacted) by certain categories or groups of social agents for a certain time, especially concerning the so-called everyday life (*Alltagskultur*). A certain focus has been given, in the last few decades, to the cultural circulations, exchanges, permutations, and mutual influences affecting traditional facts between different social classes, groups, and even individuals, but also to the sociologically significant differences in the usage of the notion of tradition, according to a variety of factors, such as social status or other contextual aspects (Bausinger [1961]2005; Dei 2002; Boyer 1990; Ginzburg 2009; Hutton 2008; Sahlins 1993). However, studies have also shown the permeability, plasticity, and reactiveness of "traditions" to present (ever-)changing social conditions (Bronner 2000; Clemente & Mugnaini 2001; Lenclud 1977, 1987; Noyes 2009; Pouillon 1975, 2007). In other words, tradition's symbolic richness, adaptability, and volatility manifest themselves in a number of "creative" features in which societal structures, *longue durée* cultural elements, postmodern mediascapes, and new forms of collective organizations and actions merge and interact inextricably. No wonder that these processes have concerned different spheres of social life, and perhaps most visibly the connected realms of religion and politics, which are often grounded, perhaps more than other spheres of human activity, on usages of a symbolic capital coming from or connected with the past. Hence, this thematic issue of *Ethnologia Europaea* will gather and discuss ethnographic cases of symbolic, political, and religious reconfiguration of European phenomena deemed "traditional".

The revival of critical scholarly interest in "traditional" things,[2] especially of a festive, ritual, or ritualesque (Santino 2009) nature, has gone hand in hand with the popular revival of those very things, especially in rural or semi-urban, peripheral,[3] and "provincial" areas.[4] Some of the "provincial" contexts that will be discussed in this issue are not only provincial because of their being administratively subordinated to a bigger city, or because they are

relatively small and not densely populated, nor because they are surrounded by the countryside. In a more structural sense, they are provincial because although they are not subaltern at the global level (they are after all part of the rich West) – they are subordinated *within* the European space, and even more so within their national contexts. In other words, they are the peripheries of the knots of the post-industrial, neoliberal world – these knots being the wealthy and culturally dynamic metropolises of the West. Hence the provincial populations of semirural or semi-urban settings are constantly dragged between two extremes: the attachment and even love for the "locality" and, on the other hand, urban ambitions or envy towards the city. They are often suspended halfway between the two poles of rurality and urbanity – not only geographically and socially, but also symbolically, and, in a manner of speaking, existentially. It is especially in these contexts that, as Jeremy Boissevain put it, "there seems to have been a spurt of celebratory activity in the years immediately following the [Second World] war. By the late 1950s this had tapered off, and festivities were declining. The decline persisted through the 1960s, but began reversing in the 1970s. In the 1980s the florescence of celebrations […] was widely visible" (Boissevain 1992: 7).[5]

In the academic realm, the years of revivalism correspond largely to the reflexive turn and the emergence of deconstructionism, of which the very notion of "tradition" has been the object, along with its kindred notions of "culture" and "religion". Rather contrariwise, at a popular level this revival and renewed interest has been sustained by – and at the same time has triggered – an "institutionalization of the past" (Macdonald 2013: 138) in new and different ways, which has actually quickly acquired the traits of a multidirectional process. In recent decades, a new wave of musealization of local traditions has occurred, along with an unprecedented "heritage fever", mainly, but far from exclusively, for identity purposes. As Frykman and Niedermüller put it: "cultural heritage, tradition, and folklore are just some of the resources that people can draw upon in order to negotiate a sense of

self and identity" (2003: 4). These considerations are now widely accepted by ethnologists.

Other dimensions are, however, also at work in the cultural machineries of re-appropriation and re-elaboration of the past in "traditional" or "traditionalizing" ways, in the frame of what has been named the European "memory-heritage-identity complex" (Macdonald 2013). This introduction is of course no place to review all of these dimensions or the general sociocultural conditions and reasons for this revival, its patterns, and the interpretations that have been offered about them – such attempts have been made in several of the works cited in these pages. Rather, our aim is to shed light on some new or less-visited paradigms and notions, specifically, ritualization, re-enchantment, and heritagization, and to enlighten and substantiate the previous theoretical and historical arguments with the help of a few carefully chosen, recently carried out ethnographic case studies across Europe. Prior to going more deeply into each of these three notions, we will briefly review some core approaches and concepts within the study of tradition.

Among the concepts that scholars of history, ethnology, or anthropology have implemented to understand how European societies transform certain social practices into "traditions", or re-functionalize practices once obsolete or exhausted, are *invention* (Hobsbawm & Ranger 1983) and *revitalization* (Boissevain 1992).[6] These refer to practices that gather together elements from a set of available symbolic sources, also adding, in the process, the chrism of the past and therefore, an aura of authenticity.[7] The concept of *structural nostalgia*, proposed by Michael Herzfeld in the context of rural Cretan society (Herzfeld 1997) illustrates how an idealized past can become a normative and shared reference for interpreting and regulating the conflicts existing in the present. The *commodification of ethnicity* (Comaroff & Comaroff 2009) mobilizes traditions as part of cultural identities included both in the economic field and the reflexive recognition of the self. With the notion of *institution of culture*, French ethnology has highlighted the contemporary mobilization of ancient craft productions, monuments

and rituals in the economic markets in southern Europe (Bromberger & Chevallier 2009; Fabre 2000, 2013; Fournier 2005, 2012), whereas Italian studies have often focused on the process of *folklorization* and *politicization* of festive culture (Bravo 1984; Faeta 2005; Gallini 1971; Testa 2014a, 2014b, 2017a, 2017b). Authors have also analysed the way in which narratives of the past, monuments, or landscapes were institutionalized in Europe as cultural goods in collaborative processes between civil society and public cultural administration (Isnart 2012). Another critical concept is *past-presencing,* that is a widespread manner of doing and experiencing the past in/as/for the present (Macdonald 2013).

Most of these notions and ideas deal with new uses of the past, with reformulations of what European societies consider meaningful and important in their present *because* of its coming from the(ir) past, thus empowering a certain social group or community to act to preserve a given "tradition" and transform it into symbolic, social, cultural, or even economic capital (Bourdieu 1986). What often underlies these representational as well as practical (and political) reformulations, adaptations, and re-enactments is the well-established (but also well-deconstructed, among scholars) dichotomy between "traditional" and "modern", or other binaries. Such an essentialized and Manichean way of looking at the relationship between the present and the past is, as already suggested, based on imaginaries of time, poetics of authenticity, and the above-mentioned "structural nostalgia".

Scholarly interpretations are thus able to account for the ways in which traditions – or what is labelled as such – are used for a variety of purposes. In fact, traditions and the traditional are still widely at work constructing and expressing local or national identities, solidifying or contesting the political order, legitimizing narratives and discourses, acquiring or maintaining symbolic positions in the arena of social and political interactions, accessing or protecting or exploiting economic resources, or placing a locality, a region, or a country on the map of transregional or transnational relations.

Most of the aforementioned notions and theoretical tools are still valid in understanding reconfigu-

rations of traditions in Europe. They have lost little or none of their explanatory power. Some of them, however, seem not to address sufficiently the important dimension of *experience*. Recent investigations into the "social life" of traditions have begun to include analysis of different, though correlated aspects of this human activity: cognition and language (Boyer 1990), knowledge (Kirshenblatt-Gimblett 2004; Tauschek 2011), and feelings and values (Fabre 2013; Heinich 2009, 2012). In order to get a better understanding of what the term "tradition" means today, the classic views on political and sociological interpretations need to be complemented with a view on the emotional aspects of this peculiarly human way of imagining and experiencing the world.

We have chosen to focus on three notions, which also highlight the experiential dimension of tradition: re-enchantment, ritualization, and heritage-making. We hope to broaden the discussion with and about them, helping to open up new formulations or hypotheses or forge new paths towards the exploration of social things considered as "traditional" and their cultural dynamics.

Re-enchantment

This concept, as it is used in the contributions to this issue, has a double connotation, which is linked to the *longue durée* history of European cultures and to the more recent transformation of the religious landscape in Europe. One important narrative of change begins before the Enlightenment period, as the end of the Middle Ages saw a shift from societies driven by religion to a non-clerical and "rational" morality of political and philosophical life. A historian like John Bossy (1985) traces the passage of political power from the Church to the Monarchy, leading to the conception of a civil and lay society as an independent and autonomous body, generating its own values. The Christian principals of charity and the celebration of the Church as a congregation were appropriated by the State, which became its own provider of medical and social care and which managed its population as a complete and all-encompassing group. Accompanying a strong criticism of (Christian)

religion as a guideline for public administration, the Enlightenment later led European scholars of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries to stress the lack of spirituality in the collective management of social life as the main feature of modernity. Labelled "disenchantment" (*Entzauberung*) by Max Weber, the more general hypothesis lay in the idea of an inevitable secularization – that is loss of religiosity – in modern Western societies and of a restructuration of power relations and social hierarchies.[8] For their part, members of the so-called French Durkheimian school never used the term "disenchantment", though they also highlighted the disappearing religious roots of modern collective life. As socialist activists searching for powerful social alternatives to industrial and productive models (Riley 2010), these scholars often illustrate "primitive" religious customs as the best examples and elementary forms of social organizations (Kurasawa 2003). For instance, Robert Hertz, known for his pre-structuralist essays on death rituals ([1907]2009) and on the right hand ([1909]2009), but also for his pioneering European ethnology ([1913]2009), always used exotic and folk European religious rituals as good examples for his contemporary peers to build on and create new futures (Isnart 2006). Thus, with the "disenchantment" of the world comes the potential for "re-enchantment", with which people can shape new avenues for their lives.

In a different vein, Alfred Gell used the expression "enchantment" to express all the practices humans carry out that lead to making a place, an artefact, a performance, or a person into something mysterious, appealing, fascinating, or magical – in a word, "special" and outside the rational perception of reality (1992). This is not to say that the very techniques of enchantment remain unknown to people responding to them, or are impossible to describe and analyse for scholars. On the contrary, Gell's project aims to understand how enchantment is made socially possible. Contradicting the Weberian diagnosis, he forces us to look precisely at the modes and effects of enchantment techniques in various domains of collective life. Gell developed his theory within the field of art, artistry, and aesthetics as one

of the most vivid arenas of enchantment in Western societies. He came to the conclusion that any human being is aware of his power and capability to create magic and fascination – this he calls *agency* (Gell 1998). But performative arts and traditional music may be other enchanting arenas to investigate (Stoichiţă 2013), just as traditional festivals, arts and crafts, or narratives could be.

More intriguingly, the "return" of traditions and the "charm" with which they often fascinate a variety of social agents ("tradition-holders", functionaries, tourists, ethnologists, and others) sometimes have, though not exclusively, explicit connections to religion or are presented as new forms of religiosity. This point appears in several of the ethnographic case studies presented in the articles of this themed section.

In recent decades, a number of clearly observable social phenomena have lent empirical support to the notion of a religious re-enchantment in Europe.[9] While Protestant and Catholic Churches are partly losing ground in Europe as institutions, different forms of "cultural religion" (Demerath 2000; Hervieu-Léger 2000) or religiosity are emerging or re-emerging: alternative forms of Christianities (Demerath 2000; Hervieu-Léger 2012; Fedele 2015); different religions brought in by migrants (Islam, for instance: Marranci 2012); new religious movements like New Age, modern witchcraft or neopaganisms (Heelas 1996; Rountree 2015; Ruickbie 2006); "invented religions" (Cusack 2010); "civil religion" (Margry 2012); "personalized" or unstructured forms of religions, often substantiated in the claim of being "spiritual" but without following any church or being part of any organized religious movement (Hervieu-Léger 2012); and crucial for our focus in this special issue: forms of "vernacular" or "folk" religion understood as the re-appropriation of popular beliefs and practices that had existed, especially in rural contexts, before modernization (Testa 2017a). Even in the (apparently) more secularized post-socialist countries, which experienced decades of state atheism, religions and religiosity have experienced a heterogeneous re-emergence since the collapse of the communist regimes (Hann

2006; Borowik & Babinski 1997; Rogers 2005; Creed 2011). Catholicism itself has seen a profound diversification of its spiritual and ritual modalities, with multiple sub-movements such as *focolare* (Bowie 2003), pre-Vatican II Catholicism (Sapitula 2010) or Taizé communities (Pritchard 2015).

In such a context of massive diversification of experiences, we would like to draw more attention to the entanglements of religion, tradition, and enchantment. What do we know about individuals' experiences and practices of enchantment, about the link between people's perceptions and collective identity? What kinds of material changes come from (re-)enchantment? How is disenchantment expressed in the human daily view, and what does enchantment-making imply for the community environment? Besides, the dialectic relationships between the disenchantment process and the will of re-enchantment have not yet been explored in any real depth and more energy is needed to better comprehend the techniques which lead to making traditional (not only religious) items a new field of identity building.

Ritualization

A reflection on the role of rituality in processes of tradition reconfiguration, and therefore in the structuring and articulation of society at large, must include a mention of the importance of the so-called Manchester School in the history of social anthropology – namely the theorization undertaken by Max Gluckman and Victor Turner. Their work constitutes the first and perhaps most important attempts to challenge, on the basis of ethnographic evidence, the functionalistic assumption of the "homeostatic" force of rituals, and therefore provokes a rethinking of the relationship between rituality and social order (Gluckman 1963; Turner 1966, 1967, 1982). Likewise, Clifford Geertz' conclusions on the behavioural codes inscribed in public rituals, which, in his opinion, can be read as "texts" about the local cultural (and religious) system, were important (Geertz 1973a, 1973b). More recently, what we might call the neofunctionalist approach developed by Don Handelman regains, develops upon,

and problematizes the preceding anthropological theories on ritual and rituality (Handelman 1999).[10]

Taking these now classical formulations of ritual into account and also expanding on them, we have chosen to focus especially on the paradigm of ritualization, considered as yet another possible way to connect the invention, revitalization, and reconfiguration of traditions (whether religious, "re-enchanting", or not) with the actual dynamics of social practices.[11]

We are fully aware of the intrinsic problems connected with working with the notion of ritual (and therefore ritualization). The first problem is that, as Don Handelman put it, "ritual [is] an area defined much more 'commonsensically' than analytically in anthropology" (Handelman 1999: XI). The second and perhaps most important reservation concerns the fact that "no single feature of ritual is peculiar to it" (Roy Rappaport quoted in Bell 2009: 152; but see also ibid.: 91–92). In another text, an article eloquently titled "Against 'Ritual'", Jack Goody put forth similar considerations, arguing that cultural operations like formalization and reiteration of actions are processes at the very basis of social life itself, and therefore not at all characteristic of things *only* ritual and nothing else (Goody 1977: 28). This is not the place to discuss or resolve these theoretical impasses, and we provisionally content ourselves with the "commonsensical zone" put forward by Handelman and with the pragmatic approach suggested by Catherine Bell: "rather than impose categories of what is or is not ritual, it may be more useful to look at how human activities establish and manipulate their own differentiation and purposes – in the very doing of the act within the context of other ways of acting" (Bell 2009: 74). In fact, Bell observed the trend towards categories of ritualization and ritual context (and contextualization) as early as the 1990s (Bell 2009: 88–93, 197–238), when she theorized ritualization "proper", often explicitly preferring this notion to that of "ritual". A few years later, Handelman noted how "over the years there have been attempts to use the idea of 'ritualization' to expand on or to replace 'ritual'" (Handelman 1999: XVII).[12]

During these years and this methodological and conceptual shift, Michael Houseman developed his considerations of rituality in the direction of a greater analytical attention to the cognitive, emotional, and behavioural dimensions of ritual, ritualizing, and ritualized practices (Berthomé & Houseman 2010; Houseman 2010).[13] A relational cultural dispositive *par excellence*, rituals, according to Houseman, have the specific purpose of establishing and structuring relationships between agents (human as well as non-human), whence emerge conclusions about rituals "as dynamic interactive contexts" (Houseman 2006: 417).

At times a contested concept, ritualization has mostly been associated with the shaping of new modalities of action (religious or not), with taxonomic reordering, and with the production of new social meanings through symbolization (or rather by making certain things "more symbolic" than others).[14] It is actually the already mentioned Don Handelman himself who reacted rather critically to the concept of ritualization. His criticism is sharp and at times provocative, but also convincing: "ritualization may be especially useful in discussing this shift from what can be called 'non-ritual' to 'ritual' – but once there, within ritual, much of its utility ends" (Handelman 1999: XVII); or

> For Bell […] there is nothing beyond ritualization, except further ritualization. A "ritual" is constituted by its ongoing ritualization of practice and action. Certain issues – like that of the internal logic of public events, or how different kinds of events relate to social orders – are of no relevance. […] For these scholars, ritual is a surface phenomenon […] it has no depth of process nor of destination (Handelman 1999: XVIII).[15]

We tend to agree with his assessment: the term "ritualization" is particularly accurate and useful when assessing the shift from non-ritual to ritual or the re-establishment of a formerly "unritualized" ritual (re-ritualization, as discussed in Testa's article in this themed issue); however, "once there, within ritual", other interpretative tools and concepts are more helpful.

Taking this criticism into consideration, as well as the different theoretical and methodological angles from which it has been addressed, and the various historical or ethnographic materials constituting its empirical foundations, in this issue we have formulated our own operational definition of "ritualization". With this term, we basically refer to that process by means of which a given practice acquires new forms, social meanings, and/or functions on the basis of performative actions resulting in its structuring and formalization, but also in the entanglement with the emotional sphere of the social agents involved.[16] In turn, processes which can either determine the re-enactment of a former ritual act or trigger the creation of a new one (or of something similar to what is normally considered a rite), is correlated to, and actually itself often fosters, broader societal transformations and structural changes.[17]

Ritualization can also be – and actually very often is – associated with a reference to previous similar ("traditional") practices, causing the distinction between ritualization and ritual revitalization – as well as a distinction between (re)invention and reconfiguration of tradition – to be often blurred. Referring to a traditional framework is a cultural operation of paramount importance, for ritualization can only happen if convergent with the establishment (or the re-establishment) of a ritual context, which is made through the synergy of several factors, for example traditional features specifically, environmental aspects, the local social setting itself, but also authority and social prestige, the mobilization of different "forms of capital" (Bourdieu 1986), etc.[18] The creation of a ritual context is not only instrumental but necessary, insofar as it is precisely the establishment of such a context that leads the ritualizing force of actions and representations to emerge, as well as to their being charged with a higher symbolic value, which also determines their being separated from the ordinariness of social life (such as by marking them as "traditional"), thus becoming veritably "ritual". In fact, as it has already been argued, aspects like formalization, repetition, reiteration, and circumscription are not intrinsically ritual: they become ritual only through ritualization and the

emergence of symbolization therein. This cannot but entail the inclusion, and therefore also exclusion, of certain symbols, actions, and representations: as Valerio Valeri observed, "ritual produces sense by creating contrasts in the continuum of experience. This implies suppressing certain elements of experience in order to give relevance to others. Thus, the creation of conceptual order is also, constitutively, the suppression of aspects of reality" (Valerio Valeri quoted in Wolf 2001: 395). Or, as Catherine Bell worded it: "this view suggests that the significance of ritual behavior lies not in being an entirely separate way of acting, but in how such activities constitute themselves as different and in contrast with other activities. […] At a basic level, ritualization is the production of this differentiation" (Bell 2009: 90). Such separation, suppression and differentiation (such as that between the traditional and the modern) are necessary for establishing the ritual context and, metonymically, the ritual itself: in a manner of speaking, it is the ritual itself that is ritualized.

The transformative patterns previously described usually involve (or rather trigger) the emergence of new behavioural configurations and new social relations or positioning of social agents in and through the newly established ritual context. It also triggers (and at the same time is based on) a reorganization of the emotional connection with the ritual(ized) objects and practices, a reorganization that can of course be ethnographically observed and recorded, as is argued and shown in some of the following articles.

Heritage-making

By the end of the nineteenth century, cultural heritage had become a strong political tool for fostering national identities in public administration. Monuments, museums, archaeology, costumes, folk literature, and music entered the realm of cultural heritage, as exemplar pieces of the past and emblems of ancestors' lives, displaying to a more and more industrial and urban population the roots and essential traits of national identity. Obviously, only a small selection has been put into the spotlight here, which shows a division between what political elites

want to value and what they prefer to hide. Administration of culture at that time fostered a certain image and a certain imaginary of identity, and tradition was one of the modalities used to engage local people in a holistic and exclusive project of nationhood grounded on a partially fictional past (Anderson 1983). With no surprise, the traditional content included in such processes often vested an official status always accompanied with a decadent, mourning, or survivalist feature, which has been termed by some French historians as "the beauty of the dead" (De Certeau, Julia & Revel [1970]1993). Coming from the past and at risk of vanishing into the mists of history, traditions were easy to manipulate and malleable enough to fit the political elites' desires. This had been the case until the end of the twentieth century in Europe, when rurality, race, and ethnic identity were at stake in conflicts and competition between colonial Empires (Great Britain, France, Germany) and continental small-scale nation states (within the Balkans for instance). More recently, traditions throughout Europe have also been used for boosting tourism industries. Anthropologists and ethnologists noticed that local traditional cultures sometimes survived thanks to the coming of foreign visitors for whom inhabitants had to perform rituals, music or art and crafts (Boissevain 1996). Similarly, ethnic minorities throughout Europe, especially Jews (with local museums, see Trevisan Semi, Miccoli & Parfitt 2013) or Roma (for *flamenco* music, see Machin-Autenrieth 2016), implemented cultural heritage programmes in order to fight against the homogeneity built by national policies and politics of culture or tourism.

Following this line, many anthropologists, ethnologists, folklorists, and museum professionals have shown that cultural heritage acts as an interface of reflexivity and as an operational device to communicate narratives of the many collective selves present on the scene (Adell et al. 2015; Fabre 2000; Kirshenblatt-Gimblett 2004; Kockel & Nic Craith 2007; Harrison 2013). However, traditions embedded in such processes of heritage-making (a term we use as a synonym of "heritagization"), be they at a local or at an intergovernmental level, always

suffer the mechanisms of hegemony and the imposition of values which are politically and ideologically charged. The heritage practitioners – official or not – (Harrison 2010; Isnart 2012) mobilize patterns of certain aesthetic, moral, and class values in their daily activities (Heinich 2009, 2011). More generally, this rather wide, much-encompassing new narrative, which Smith called the *authorized heritage discourse* (Smith 2006), that is the universalization of the Unesco heritage conception (a "worldwide mentality", according to Bendix 2009: 257), is largely based on Western, nationalist, elitist, and upper-class criteria (Bortolotto 2011; Bendix, Eggert & Peselmann 2013). The universality claimed by Unesco, and by some of the heritage actors, challenges in fact local definitions of what is important to safeguard, to conserve or to restore. It provokes a great number of counter-discourses (Bondaz, Isnart & Leblon 2012), either merging the Unesco views with regional or religious understandings of heritage, or translating the international framework into indigenous languages, or even maintaining the local understandings of recognition of the past and valuable goods fighting against economic dispossession or political marginality (Bondaz et al. 2014; Hodges 2011; Testa 2017b).

In sum, heritage-making is not only a way of transforming and remodelling traditional content per se; it is also an opportunity for people in charge of memory claims and cultural management to think up and build their own concepts, tools, and procedures based on what they see as valuable. In the words of Carneiro da Cunha (2009), heritagization touches both what social science names Culture (the collective framework that structures and commands the common life within a group) and what people are claiming to be their "culture" (the elements selected to represent the group and to communicate with others).

Thus, such heritage reconfigurations of the performances and objects deemed as traditional not only imply a transformation of the rituals, the narratives, or the aesthetics. They also touch, more importantly to us, the very cognitive, sensorial, and representational structures of speaking and thinking about collective and individual identities. Analysing

the transfer of a local festival, a piece of music, or handicraft know-how from ordinary life to a heritage environment leads us to consider that the people engaged in heritage-making are dealing with a more profound and more complex reconfiguration of culture than simply an economic or political (mis-)use of culture, the past, or tradition.

The research agenda linked to this broader understanding of the reconfiguration of traditions in Europe calls for a more diverse and multidirectional investigation. Binary oppositions such as tourism vs. locality, authenticity vs. fake, participation vs. display, institution vs. folk, official vs. unofficial, and heritage vs. daily life seem to be widely at work at the emic level. Our intention is to understand the reasons for this conceptual incorporation among social agents, and we are also interested in analysing the polysemic and not necessarily polarized cultural intersections and interactions involved in heritagization processes. A first line of inquiry may consist in scrutinizing the way in which individuals are dealing with changes in traditions: what do people think of the transformations of their traditions? Are they active in the process? What are the arguments they use to legitimate the change? Do they always agree? What are the emotional and material consequences of the reconfiguration for their proper lives? A second avenue of interrogation concerns the role of conflicts and competition within the processes of heritagization of tradition. Who are the masters of the play, what kind of hierarchical system is structuring the present forces? How do people win or lose control of the situation and with what emotional effect? When is victory claimed and contested? Lastly, but this list is not exhaustive, the transformation of traditions makes room for an inquiry into the *dispositifs*[19] employed by actors to deal with traditions: museums and archives are always the most efficient and popular structures to be put in place. But what is the role of more innovative devices, like the Intangible Cultural Heritage convention or the Faro convention? What about digital social networks mobilized in the dynamics of heritage-making? What kinds of collaboration – or exclusion – establish themselves, and between which institutions and actors? What

are the transformations of the *dispositifs* when they come into contact with traditional objects? Could we witness some looping effects between heritage devices and traditions?

The contributions to this thematic issue will not be able to address all of the topics we develop in this introduction. Nevertheless, our aim is to contribute to a rethinking of the theoretical scope and significance of these notions of re-enchantment, ritualization, and heritage-making vis-à-vis the more classical concepts and theories that link culture to economics, politics, and to other more or less theoretically circumscribed "spheres" of human activity (Terpe 2016). As ethnologists educated in and working in and on Europe, and as the editors of this issue, we have continued and amplified the trend of political and sociological analysis in the field of those social elements deemed "traditional"; however, we have also felt it necessary to reevaluate the concepts and the methodology of doing this. Thus, this issue represents both a tribute to previous analytic paradigms and an effort to consolidate the renewal of our field, in an attempt to connect the micro-level of our empirically oriented ethnographic investigations with general societal patterns widely characterizing the European cultural space today.

The Articles in this Issue

Such consolidation and rethinking cannot but be cultivated on the ground of a theoretical contribution, firmly resting on solid empirical evidence, for ethnology as a discipline was born, has grown, and is now mature as an empirically oriented discipline. This is the reason why the contributions forming this issue stem – however differently – from ethnographically gathered materials or evidence-based considerations, even though the approaches of the individual authors vary.

Alessandro Testa's chapter explores the three main concepts and experiential aspects at the centre of this special issue (re-enchantment, ritualization, and heritage-making), on the empirical grounds of three different ethnographic cases from Italy, the Czech Republic, and Catalonia (Spain), offering fresh evidence as well as a theoretical discussion.

The latter is developed against the backdrop both of the existing secondary literature and the analyses and suggestions presented in this introduction. The text also attempts to demonstrate how re-enchantment, ritualization, and cultural heritage-making can co-exist and interact within or around the same traditional facts as complementary (or at least not mutually exclusive) processes. It examines in what sense their correlation and interaction can be thought of in terms of "tradition reconfiguration". This is also done by discussing the related concepts of "(re)traditionalization" and "past-presencing", as well as other related themes, such as symbolization, mythopoiesis, popular Frazerism, and (pseudo-)religious heritage.

Grounded on his ethnographic research in the village of Tende (southern France, 2005–2011), Cyril Isnart shows in which ways heritage-making and enchantment frame the dynamics of the identity of an Alpine community facing the consecutive concealment and renewal of religious practices and local associations of worship. In the framework of the historical and anthropological literature on local religion, this case helps to better understand what conditions are necessary in order to reconfigure the ritual groups called *confraternita* or *confréries* (brotherhoods) and for a village pilgrimage related to traditions to be safeguarded and valued. Nevertheless, the text also demonstrates that working on such remote, small and classical communities could provide ethnology and anthropology of religion with models to be compared with other social or religious contexts, and open new paths to better grasp how "traditions" are reconfigured within our contemporary societies.

Eva Löfgren offers a thorough study of an interesting and rather peculiar example of "re-enchantment": the reconstruction of destroyed churches in Sweden, a society thought to be so thoroughly secularized that it does not seem to be a rational investment of resources. Her profound and detailed analysis of several interesting case studies from different Swedish regions illuminates the ways in which even apparently superfluous acts of material reconstruction can actually trigger and engender a

rather rich series of social dynamics connected with questions of cultural institutionalization, memory, identity, and religiosity.

In Pedro Antunes' article we encounter the moving, pious examples of Portuguese ritual performances for the souls of the dead. The author brings us into the social fabric of religious mourning in a context of "southern Catholicism", and does so by means of an insightful, "thick", but also empathetic ethnography. In this article, too, we see at work the complex machinery of traditional reconfiguration and/through ritualization, re-enchantment, and heritage-making. The author engages deeply with the concept of heritage-making, relating it to an evident process of re-enchantment in the Portuguese context within which the fieldwork was conducted, seeking to understand the role, the relevance, and the transmission of these phenomena, their social conditions, and the cultural factors that allow their reproduction.

Following these articles is a forum gathering a large panel of anthropologists and ethnologists who have been working in and on Europe for at least two decades. Each of them was called upon to react to a simple question: What can we say today about the notion of tradition and what can we do with it? From eastern to southern Europe, from cultural heritage to social anthropology, from historical perspectives to the moral engagement that seems to come with our disciplines, the nine contributions to the forum depict a diverse landscape of approaches, methodologies, and epistemologies of tradition, including some lessons on what tradition can reveal about our contemporary world. We invite the readers to read and compare the perspectives given in the forum and to add their own views during their classes and seminars, in order to bring this forum to life outside of these pages.

Altogether this introduction, the four articles, and the forum contribute to a new way of framing and reconfiguring the study of tradition in Europe.

Notes
1 The idea of this special issue originated on the occasion of a panel for the 13th SIEF Congress in Göttingen,

April 2017. We would like to thank the general editors, the anonymous reviewers, and Jonathan Riches for helping to improve the present article as well as the other articles of this themed issue.

2 The word "revival" is used for the sake of brevity. Theories of "tradition" and traditional "revitalization" have multiplied ever since the publication of Hobsbawm & Ranger 1983; see, for instance, Bronner 2000; Clemente & Mugnaini 2001; Handler & Linnekin 1984; Glassie 1995; Istenič 2012; Noyes 2009; Pouillon 2007; Testa 2016a and 2016b; just to quote a few. An interesting typology, building on the micro-semantic distinctions between terms such as "invention", "revitalization", "revivification", "reanimation", "restoration", "resurrection", "retraditionalization", and "folklorization" is in Boissevain 1992.

3 For a recent discussion on the categories of "marginality" and "periphery" in European anthropology, cf. Martínez 2019.

4 "Provincial", a controversial, commonsensical, and apparently inaccurate adjective, is used here in the manner Dorothy Noyes uses and theorizes it (Noyes 2003: 9–12).

5 Roughly the same periodization has been proposed by other scholars. In fact, accounts of this revival and re-emergence in Europe are numerous. One of the first (and best) studies into the "revival" of popular religious traditions in a European marginal context (Sardinia), and its going hand in hand with other processes such as massification, touristification, commodification, etc. is Gallini 1971. Other French and Italian scholars would soon follow suit: Bravo 1984; Fabre & Camberoque 1977; Valeri 1979 (just to cite three exemplary works). Boissevain 1992 remains a work of reference; others, more recent ones, where the problem is also treated generically and/or comparatively are (this list is necessarily very partial): Ariño & Lombardi Satriani 1997; Clemente & Mugnaini 2001; Faeta 2011; Herzfeld 1982; Hodges 2011; Macdonald 2013; Testa 2014a; Testa 2017a.

6 "The revitalisation of traditions all over Europe goes hand in hand with economic globalisation and post-industrial modernisation. The celebration of newly invented folk traditions as authentic, the display of regional identities and heritages […], the production of legitimacy through languages and practices of conservation and essentialisation and the belief that 'old' or 'original' is an equivalent for 'good'" (Knecht & Niedermüller 2003: 89).

7 "What is historical and typical is authentic, and it is assumed that authenticity is objectively ascertainable" (Handler 1988: 200); see also Bendix 1997.

8 Weber 1919. A classical interpretation of Weber's paradigm can be found in Acquaviva 1966. For other ap-

proaches and declensions of the Weberian paradigm of *Entzauberung*, see Tschannen 1992. In this study the notion of re-enchantment is preferred instead of those, closely associated, of de-secularization, re-sacralization, or re-confessionalization, following a terminological, theoretical, and methodological choice explained in Testa 2017a: 25–27.

9 The literature on this topic is today very rich and includes a significant corpus of studies for rethinking classical sociological hypotheses about the presumed inevitable secularization of the industrial world, notably Europe and "the West". In this note as well as in the text above, only some of the most representative works are cited: Barker & Warburg 1990; Davie & Hervieu-Léger 1996; Eller 2007: 160–172; Heelas 1996.

10 Handelman's perspective is particularly interesting, in our case, because he is an anthropologist of the contemporary world, dealing mostly with public rituals in Western nation states, rather than with non-European contexts. Handelman's theorization about how – and why – public rituals work within/for/against/around a given sociopolitical order has been very inspiring and inform some of the following pages.

11 The ontological, definitional, and methodological problems related to the study of ritual and ritualization are discussed at length in Testa 2014a: 56–77, 499–510, and passim.

12 European examples of "ritualization process" were early discussed, with theoretical far-sightedness, by Eric Hobsbawm (Hobsbawm 1983a, 1983b).

13 "Ritual occasions [are] a privileged arena for investigating emotions" (Berthomé & Houseman 2010: 69).

14 On ritualization as a cultural means by which certain social meanings acquire a special relevance, cf. Bell 2009: 90–93; on a theory of ritual symbolic graduation and hierarchy (i.e. on how and why certain things, especially ritual things, become "more symbolic"), see Testa 2014a: 69–75.

15 Handelman's criticism and its merits and limits are discussed in Testa 2014a: 65–77.

16 Anthropological definitions, theories, and analyses of performance can be found in Turner 1982 and Kolankiewicz 2008.

17 A recent sociological definition states that ritualization can be conceptualized as a "ubiquitous form of social behavior in which people engage in regularized and repetitive actions which are grounded in actors' cognitive maps or, to use another phrase, symbolic frameworks" (Knottnerus 1997: 260).

18 The notion of ritual context is well defined in Bell 2009: 69–93 and passim.

19 *Dispositif* is used here in Foucault's understanding of the term, i.e. as an ensemble of values and procedures that frame a social domain (Foucault 1980).

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