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‘EU cultural policy: framed between a vertical modern memory and a horizontal postmodern space’.

Introduction.

At a first glance, EU cultural policy seems to have as its central activity the funding of the arts and heritage while promoting co-operation, exchange and mobility within the EU through cultural creativity. However, EU cultural policy is not as simple and straightforward as it might seem. It has been hi-jacked by ways of identity building. EU means of identity construction are *sous-jacente* and only a very close study of the latent discourse, which is inherent in the policy, can reveal them. This close study is essential since otherwise the objectives and activities of the EU in the cultural policy sector are viewed and recognised only partially. If an analyst were to limit the study of EU cultural policy to the funding of cultural NGOs and implementation of transnational projects, she/he would be missing at least half of the EU potential in the area. A close discourse study of EU ‘ways of doing’ (i.e. through actions and means) and the EU ‘ways of talking’ cultural policy through EU official documentation and speeches proves that attempts towards mobility, cooperation and the planning of projects have as an ultimate goal the shaping of European identity.

EU cultural policy’s objective of identity building is illustrated both through a discourse analysis of EU actions and a discourse analysis of EU official documentation in the field. EU actions in the area refer to the funding of projects, activities and events that are characterised as ‘cultural’ as well as the means to achieve these (notably migration, exchange and co-operation). EU official documentation in the area refers to how the EU builds identity through the language of its official documents (official journal, internal policy reviews, conference minutes, budget administration, legislative literature and other), its images and logos and elite’s speeches (MEPs, Commissioners, etc). Actions and documentation seem to shift between two main EU objectives that refer both to a past and present period of time. The objective of the past has to do with the debate on a supposedly shared European cultural heritage that includes specific elements which are cultural in essence involving architecture, music, the so-called high arts and literature all of which belong to an earlier period. The objective of the present has to do with actions and activities that promote exchange, co-operation, mobility and creativity in the cultural sector (for instance mobility of artists, support of cultural NGOs and networks, platforms for co-operation and discussion of cultural affairs). These two objectives are not necessarily compatible given the fact that they involve both modern and postmodern strategies of identity building while mixing European with EU-ropean practices.¹

The dichotomies and dualities between past and present, between the European and EU-ropean aspects of identity and EU cultural policy could be discussed from different angles and in different frameworks. I have decided to study them through EU cultural policy’s discourse analysed through the actions and official

¹ I argue elsewhere that ‘European’ practices refer to broadly and often quite vaguely defined continental Europe whereas ‘EU-ropean’ practices characterise the specifically and rather narrowly defined EU.

documentation in order to better illustrate their internal and latent dual dynamics. A discourse study of policy actions and official documentation, interviews and my work experience in the Directorate General for Education and Culture in the Commission revealed that the EU discourse on identity through cultural policy was lying between two nearly conflicting parameters which I have defined here as space and memory.

Space refers to a EU a-locality and its strong purpose to avoid territoriality in its discourse and action objectives. Space involves mobility and fluidity along with vagueness in terms of borders and frontiers. The EU does not have any set geographical borders like most European nation states would, due to its flexibility regarding enlargement and its openness to territoriality. Cultural policy makes use of this space in order to bring its members closer to one another by encouraging stronger co-operation and exchange. Indeed this kind of space has postmodern tendencies (in terms of its fluidity, a-locality and work in progress strategy which denies permanent and fixed territoriality).

Memory refers to a supposedly shared European past. Through its cultural policy discourse on heritage and its actions promoting elements of a historical past the EU attempts to build the identity of a common past, almost a common history. This strategy is rather compatible to nation states' strategy of national identity building based on a common past, shared history and joint values. This identity construction rationale is rather modern given its similarities with national identity building.

Following my main argument in this article, i.e. that EU cultural policy builds indeed some sort of European or EU-ropean identity based on both modern and postmodern strategies, I seek to explore how the postmodern and the modern figure in the EU cultural policy debate. On the one hand, I have defined the postmodern strategy of EU identity building as being based on notions of a common and shared contemporary 'space'. On the other hand, I have defined modern strategies of identity building as a 'memory', which promotes a common and shared European heritage. I discuss in this article both space and memory first from a theoretical perspective and I then apply it to the EU rationale.

My theoretical background, which also influenced the title of this article, has been inspired by Amin Maalouf's work *On Identity*. Maalouf has argued that 'each one of us has two heritages, a 'vertical' one that comes to us from our ancestors, our religious community and our popular traditions, and a 'horizontal' one transmitted to us by our contemporaries and by the age we live in'.² Departing from Maalouf's understanding of the existence of two dynamics when it comes to identity building, I argue in this article that EU builds identity based on the shaping of a horizontal postmodern space and a vertical modern memory.

Space and memory in collective identity building.

The construction of a way of life (i.e. culture) may be designed by actors, or elite groups in terms of politics, using a variety of means. However, I am concentrating in this article on two aspects of cultural identity building, which seem particularly useful for EU identity construction in particular: space, and memory. European elite groups have used these two parameters consistently in order to build a new culture for purely legitimacy purposes. Both nation states in Europe and the EU have devised a new supposedly shared and common culture to their collective group through the building of a common space and memory. Nation states in Europe and the EU have not acted

² Maalouf, A. (2000), *On Identity*, the Harvill Press, London, p.86.

in parallel ways when devising their culture and identity construction techniques. Although nation states have concentrated on the building of sameness, the EU seems to have opted for the construction of similarity. Consequently, space and memory are engineered differently in each case although, as I will be noting in the coming section, in certain cases EU identity engineering methods overlap with national identity ones. This overlap might explain tensions and problems with EU identity building and EU legitimacy.

Space and EU identity building.

Space is an underpinning of identity and as Lefebvre, Foucault and Soja have discussed vehemently ‘space is an irreducible, essential quality of humanness and social being’.³ It is commonly believed that people are placed within a space, ‘that they come from somewhere’.⁴ People tend to feel more comfortable within an environment that is a ‘familiar phenomenological space’.⁵ Space makes the familiar and the known and space is essential to living since ‘no event can take place without space’.⁶ When space is used for building a culture with the view of constructing identity, space usually plays the role of the secure and stable point of reference. Realising the importance of a secure and familiar space for the individual’s identity, elite groups use a shared notion of space for the shaping of a supposedly common culture, which will eventually result in the strengthening of a common collective identity.

Before beginning to analyse the ways in which space is used to shape culture and consequently group identity, I feel the need to make the distinction between place and space or, otherwise phrased, between the local and the social. Place refers to that physical location, to the geographical and concrete space. Social space refers to postmodern notions of spatiality where locality is not geographical but mental, imagined or virtual. National identity is deep rooted in place and its members imagine their belonging to a nation through specific localities such as monuments or urban landscapes.⁷ The mental and imagined or virtual spaces might have recently been incorporated to the imagining of a nation although these have been less used as means of shaping national identity. Supranational identity is not usually located in place and tends to rather concentrate on postmodern (hence social) aspects of spatiality. The EU as a supranational identity constructor seems to be following a postmodern rationale of space.

There are both traditional and contemporary ways of using space in order to shape culture and consequently identity. Traditional means regard space as a locality that is clearly bounded. Boundaries and specific local frontiers of a community shape the community members’ shared sense of identity. More recent and especially postmodern theories discuss space as a means of identity shaping that does not accept a specifically bounded locality. According to traditional schools of thought

³ Allen, R. L. (1999), ‘The socio-spatial making and marking of ‘Us’: Toward a critical postmodern spatial theory of difference and community’, *Social Identities*, Vol. 5, No 3, pp.249-277, p.252.

⁴ Hall, S. (1995), ‘Fantasy, Identity, Politics’ in Carter, E., Donald, J., Squires, J. (eds), *Cultural Remix. Theories of Politics and the Popular*, Lawrence and Wishart London, p.67.

⁵ Keesing, R. (1974), ‘Theories of Culture’, *Annual Review of Anthropology*, Vol.3, pp.73-95, p.85.

⁶ Allen, R. L. (1999), ‘The socio-spatial making and marking of ‘Us’: Toward a critical postmodern spatial theory of difference and community’, *Social Identities*, Vol. 5, No 3, pp.249-277, p.253.

⁷ I am borrowing the notion of an imagined nation from Benedict Anderson. He argues that communities are imagined because it is impossible for all their members to meet in real life. See Anderson, B. (2000), *Imagined Communities*, Verso, p.6.

space is geographical whereas according to postmodern theories space is social. Following this theoretical dichotomy, identities exist both *in* space but also *across* space.⁸ Identities that are located in a specific and stable area exist *in* space whereas dislocated identities that are shaped through communication and new technologies and through postmodern social spaces exist *across* space.

In traditional identity theory, space is identified with a specifically located geographical area supported by primordial socio-historical references. People tend to feel more comfortable when they have a clearly defined geographical space as a local reference to their collective identity. In most cases of talking about invasion of one's space (whether this is in purely political terms an invasion of a state or even in psychological terms an invasion of personal space) people tend to visualise in their minds a particular location, which they consider to be part of themselves. Nation state building invariably uses space as a stable geographically bounded setting that consolidates its members' identities. Those not belonging to that specific space are the intruders and outsiders whereas those belonging to it are the insiders. Space is meant to be a solid place for its members where they feel most comfortable and secure.

Consequently, space is the safe, the sheltered, the *home* or *heimat*. The stability that is provided to the individual thanks to a sense of place is linguistically presented as a sense 'of being at home'. The word 'home' is identified to the safe and the stable to the point that there exist several everyday expressions bearing the term home which mean the sheltered and the comfortable. In connotations such as 'make yourself at home', a 'home-made' meal or a 'home truth' the idea of home takes the meaning of the sheltered and the secure.⁹ In traditional schools of studying spatiality, the *home* has been identified with a fatherland, the place where people grew up and the parents' 'mythic homeland'.¹⁰ In most cases the *home* has been identified with -at a small scale- a neighbourhood, village, or town and -at a large scale- a city, region or country.

In most instances, traditional schools of thought conceptualise space on socio-historical and geographical bases neglecting the social dimension of space, which has been celebrated thanks to postmodernism. Soja has noted that 'modernist social science has neglected the socially re/productive aspects of space, relegating it to a neutral backdrop or primordial container for socio-historical relations'.¹¹ More recent theorising on identity and space goes against the geographical aspect of space. Postmodernism in particular questioned the geography and adopted a social perspective of understanding space. The globalisation processes 'with increased contact becoming unavoidable' designed the newly emerged 'dialogical' (according to Featherstone) or 'social' (according to Lefebvre and Soja) spaces.¹² Edward Soja discussed the formation of new 'postmodern geographies'.¹³ He went further than the purely geographical space in order to study a socio-space link. According to Soja, space can be something that is initially 'given' but its 'organisation and meaning'

⁸ Massey, D. (1992), 'A place called home?', *New Formations*, No 17, Summer 1992, pp.3-15, p.12.

⁹ Sarup, M. (1996), *Identity, Culture and the Postmodern world*, Edited by Raja, T., Edinburgh University Press, p.2.

¹⁰ Bammer, A. (1992), 'Editorial', *New Formations*, No 17, Summer 1992, pp. vii-xi, p.vii.

¹¹ Allen, R. L. (1999), 'The socio-spatial making and marking of 'Us': Toward a critical postmodern spatial theory of difference and community', *Social Identities*, Vol. 5, No 3, pp.249-277, p.252.

¹² Featherstone, M. (1995), 'Localism, Globalism and cultural identity' in Featherstone, M. *Undoing Culture. Globalisation, postmodernism and identity*, Sage Publications, p.102. See also coming references to Soja's work.

¹³ Soja, E. (1989), *Postmodern Geographies: The Reassertion of Space in critical social theory*, London, Verso.

become a product of what he called a ‘social translation, transformation and experience’.¹⁴ Following this thinking, the organisation of one’s space is a product of social interaction. This social exchange creates in our time a new ‘spatiality produced by international communications and image networks’.¹⁵ Since the postmodern era is that of ‘immense spatial upheaval’ space becomes rather global and dislocated.¹⁶ ‘A truly global space of cultural connections and dissolutions has become not only imaginable [...] but lived ‘postmodernist’ reality’.¹⁷ This new social space has been identified with the so-called ‘Thirdspace’.¹⁸

Having analysed the difference between traditional/modern and postmodern space, what remains for me to investigate in this section is how space is used to build a culture, which will consequently shape collective identity. Power structures, such as a national government or a supranational entity attempt to convince the self that what they share (culture) can also be located within a specific space, which can either be local or social. In the case of national identity, nation states in Europe often use a specific geographical locality for the shaping of national identity. Culture has been engineered through space in a form of local (i.e. spatial) representations: a monument, a landscape, physical frontiers, etc. The culture or way of life of the shared identity is hence designed in geographical terms. Contrary to the nation state supranational entities tend to fight against geographical notions of space. They use rather imagined and social spaces for their group identity building. Supranational entities tend to concentrate on a common goal, vision, objective that unites the group and use virtual and imagined means instead of geographical with the view of creating spatiality.

The EU in particular does not shape identity in the same way as the nation state, i.e. based on a specific locality or territoriality. National identity is that which is shared among the imagined citizens of a specific territoriality. The nation state has traditionally set clear frontiers usually labelled with emblems and symbols such as the national flag in order to define its space. Citizens in certain cases are ready to fight or even die for that territory. In the EU case such allegiance to the local or to the ‘land’ does not exist. Any kind of allusion to a ‘fatherland’ as in the case of Germany or a ‘motherland’ as in the case of Greece do not exist within the EU understanding of space. Hence, stable and unchanged territoriality is irrelevant with regard to EU identity building. There are instead either local spaces ‘on progress’ or social spaces that make a supposedly European imagined community. I should note at this stage that although the EU would like to suggest that a space of an imagined community among European citizens exists already, statistics prove that citizens do not feel as attached to that space as the EU elites would wish.¹⁹

¹⁴ Soja, E. (1989), *Postmodern Geographies: The Reassertion of Space in critical social theory*, London, Verso, pp. 79-80.

¹⁵ Morley, D. and Robins, K. (1995), *Spaces of Identity. Global media, electronic landscapes and cultural boundaries*, Routledge London and New York, p.74.

¹⁶ Massey, D. (1992), ‘A place called home?’, *New Formations*, No 17, Summer 1992, pp.3-15, p.3.

¹⁷ Bammer, A. (1992), ‘Editorial’, *New Formations*, No 17, Summer 1992, pp. vii-xi, p.vii.

¹⁸ Assuming that the first space is the real space (hence the geographic locality), the second space is the imagined space and the third space -or ‘thirdspace’- is the one which derives from social interaction, hence the social space. See Allen, R. L. (1999), ‘The socio-spatial making and marking of ‘Us’: Toward a critical postmodern spatial theory of difference and community’, *Social Identities*, Vol. 5, No 3, pp.249-277 and Soja (1996), *Thirdspace*, Cambridge, Blackwell Publishers.

¹⁹ See results of the *Eurobarometer* organised and published by Eurostat (the European Commission’s statistical service in Luxembourg).

In particular, I recognise two kinds of local spaces with regard to EU identity building. The first one is a shared space among EU citizens of the member states. The second one is the centralised EU space depicted in the European Institutions. Both spaces are defined against stable and fixed territoriality, which is the case for national identity. The space the EU uses, as a means of a shared identity among its citizens is a 'locality in process' in a sense that due to enlargements the shared territory is often expanded. Likewise, the space of European elites is also a-local. The EU centralised institutional space is spread among three cities (Brussels, Luxembourg and Strasbourg) whereas a series of other agencies exist in all member states (Environment in Denmark, Drugs and Pharmacy in the UK, the Bank in Germany, etc.). EU locality is spread across the Union. It is somehow 'located' everywhere and nowhere. The symbolism and emblems of that spatial practice follow a rationale of vagueness and void. The European flag flies throughout Europe imagining EU presence across the member states. It represents however an 'empty space' in the twelve-starred circle.²⁰ Whereas the European anthem 'is a silent music' where the absence of words responds again to this notion of void and vagueness [my emphasis].²¹

In order to understand how the EU conceptualises its social space an understanding of EU projects and distribution of funding as well as organisation of mobility are essential. I have already argued that the EU territory is an open space which is changed through various enlargements and which is neither fixed nor stable. The EU space however is not only a *local* open space. The EU space is above all a *social* space of interaction, mobility, exchange and co-operation. Being social, EU understanding of space follows postmodern notions of space rather than traditional ideals of a stable territory and fixed locality. A quick look at how EU projects work is illustrative of how the EU follows postmodern reasoning with regard to social spatiality, notably citizens' mobility. Citizens are mobile within a specific territory (EU member states), which is however often changed and expanded. Currently, a variety of projects exist that include possibilities of stay for work at accession and candidate countries.²² Hungarians, Polish and other nationals are already part of that space and are experiencing mobility within EU space whereas official EU citizens may also already work in one of the accession countries. Hence, EU social and mobility space is rather flexible and fluctuates according to adaptable objectives and policies.

Furthermore, EU space is a EU-ropean virtual space, which operates mainly through the richness of information, that the EU server *europa* provides.²³ Almost anything concerning the EU can be found on that server: from the politics and policies of the EU to current debates, funding sources, national governments' structure, and so much more. In an ideal EU top-down perspective this social space would bring citizens closer to the EU through the Internet's virtual practices and make

²⁰ Václav Havel has made the point on how the 12 stars of the flag (which was borrowed by the Council of Europe) symbolise the 'rhythmical passage of time, with its 12 hours in the day and 12 months in the year', which makes allusion to the 'sudden acceleration of time that we are witnessing in Europe today'. See Havel, V. (1990), 'The power of dreaming. Speech to Council of Europe Assembly, Strasbourg, 10 May 1990', in Leonard, D. and Leonard, M. (2002), *The Pro-European Reader*, Palgrave, p.103.

²¹ Abélès, M. (2000), 'Virtual Europe' in Bellier, I. and Wilson, T. (eds.), *An Anthropology of the European Union. Building, Imagining and Experiencing the New Europe*, Berg, p.38.

²² See majority of education, research, culture and development projects, for instance, Socrates, Marie Curie fellowships and Culture 2000.

²³ <http://www.europa.eu.int> in the EU-11 official languages.

them more aware of their EU-ropean identity. With this objective in mind one of the first internal communicative Commission reforms Prodi introduced was the homogenisation of European officials' email addresses so that citizens could find it easier to get in touch with Eurocrats on specific queries. Likewise the introduction of a chat service between Commissioners and the large public was brought to the fore.

Consequently, EU identity building has been based on a rather postmodern rationale when using space as part of the process. Postmodern aspects of that spatiality are illustrative of the open, unfixed and constantly changeable locality along with a virtual and fluid social spatiality. However, the EU usage of memory with the view of identity building follows a rather different process of shaping, which is far from having postmodern tendencies.

Memory and EU identity building.

Like space, memory is a good means of understanding the self and the construction of a shared memory leads to belonging to a common identity. In that respect, memory and identity are linked. Ask a person about her/his identity and she/he will start telling you a story. This is a narrative of her/his identity, which depicts what the person seems to remember. It seems then that 'our identity is not separate from what has happened', hence our memory.²⁴ Consequently, the theory that every man understands as his own whatever he remembers and in his 'senses believes what he distinctly remembers' proves that one's identity can correspond to one's memory.²⁵ Narratives have been 'mediated' to the self 'through the enormous spectrum of social and political institutions and practices'.²⁶ In that sense, collective identity memory has been shaped in a constructive way from above; it is not 'naturally generated but socially constructed'.²⁷

Memory has been used by collective groups as a tool to construct an 'imagined community'.²⁸ From family groups that seek to strengthen their family's identity by designing family trees and tracing back in time heroic actions of their ancestors to ethnic groups and social minorities collective memories, the need to search identity through memory has been pronounced.²⁹ Anthony Smith saw individuals within a community and a generation 'form indissoluble links in a chain of memories and identities'.³⁰

In most cases of elite's shaping a way of life, for the self through memory, recollection is used selectively and constructively. Nation states in particular have used selective memory as their best instrument to construct national identity and shape national awareness and history. Nations seem to be unique not just because of what they are able to remember but also by what they choose to forget. Renan had

²⁴ Sarup, M. (1996), *Identity, Culture and the Postmodern world*, Edited by Raja, T., Edinburgh University Press, p.15.

²⁵ Reid, T.(1975), 'Of Identity' in Perty, J. *Personal Identity*, University of California Press, p.110.

²⁶ Somers, M. R. (1994), 'The narrative construction of identity: a relational and network approach', *Theory and Society*, Vol. 23, pp.605-649, p.625.

²⁷ Eisenstadt, S. N. (1998), 'Modernity and the Construction of Collective Identities', *International Journal of Comparative Sociology*, Vol. XXXIX, No 1, p.140.

²⁸ Anderson, B. (2000) *Imagined Communities*, London Verso. See in particular chapter 11 on 'Memory and Forgetting'.

²⁹ Nora, P. (1989), 'Between memory and history: Les lieux de mémoire', *Representations*, 26: 7-25, p.15.

³⁰ Olick, J. (1998), 'Memory and the Nation-Continuities, Conflicts, and Transformations', *Social Science History* 22:4, pp.377-387, p.378.

already in the 19th century pointed out ‘the ways in which national identities combine remembering and forgetting with greater emphasis on the latter’.³¹ Xavier Pitafo, a Portuguese historian has claimed that ‘every nation edits its own past’.³² The editing of the past responds to elite’s present needs. National pasts in particular have been shaped according to ‘present interests’.³³ The edited past is usually performed thanks to a series of activities or objects which Pierre Nora has called ‘lieux de mémoire’.³⁴ These can range from symbols such as the flag and celebrations of particular events to cemeteries and museums where all kinds of memory objects and people are placed for commemoration and recognition as being part of the collective identity.³⁵ Olick and Robbins have provided a series of ‘lieux de mémoire’ that might encompass ‘clothing, medals’, ‘heroes’, ‘national mythologies’ or even ‘literature and film’.³⁶ When collective groups transfer cultural identity to the individual through memory they tend to be as constructive as possible by appearing however spontaneous and natural. Pierre Nora has argued that ‘there is no spontaneous memory’ and that ‘we’ (i.e. nation states or other collective groups) ‘must deliberately create archives, maintain anniversaries, organise celebrations, pronounce eulogies, and notarise bills because such activities no longer occur naturally’.³⁷ I argue that these activities never occurred naturally.

The edited past of collective groups’ memories is invariably used for shaping identities in the present. When memory ‘negotiates’ between past and present it defines individual and collective selves.³⁸ There always seem to be a need to tell stories about the past ‘in constructing identities in the present’.³⁹ Elites tend to use constructed cultural identities based on memory in order to continuously shape identities in the present. Marco Cinnirella has provided an interesting example of this particularity of elite’s identity construction through memory. When England played against Germany in the football semi-final of 1996 European Championship, the British media used images and discourses from the Second World War clearly conceptualising the football game as ‘a re-enactment of a past military conflict’.⁴⁰

Memory claims can be faulty and it is often necessary to check on their truth, i.e. to reassure ‘whether a person remembers something without taking his word

³¹ Olick, J. and Robbins, J. (1998), ‘Social memory studies: from ‘collective memory’ to the historical sociology of mnemonic practices’, *Annual Review of Sociology*, 24:105-40, p.117.

³² Lowenthal, D. (1994), ‘Identity, Heritage and history’ in Gillis, J.R. (ed) *Commemorations. The Politics of national identity*, Princeton University Press, p.50.

³³ Olick, J. and Robbins, J. (1998), ‘Social memory studies: from ‘collective memory’ to the historical sociology of mnemonic practices’, *Annual Review of Sociology*, 24:105-40, p.125.

³⁴ Nora, P. (1989), ‘Between memory and history: Les lieux de mémoire’, *Representations*, 26: 7-25.

³⁵ Signs of commemoration as ‘fetishes of an imagined nation’ are also discussed in Redfield, M. (1999), ‘IMAGI-NATION. The imagined community and the aesthetics of mourning’, *Diacritics*, Vol. 29, No 4, pp.58-83.

³⁶ Olick, J. and Robbins, J. (1998), ‘Social memory studies: from ‘collective memory’ to the historical sociology of mnemonic practices’, *Annual Review of Sociology*, 24:105-40, p.124.

³⁷ Nora, P. (1989), ‘Between memory and history: Les lieux de mémoire’, *Representations*, 26: 7-25, p.12.

³⁸ Olick, J. (1998), ‘Memory and the Nation-Continuities, Conflicts, and Transformations’, *Social Science History*, 22:4, pp.377-387, p.385.

³⁹ Morley, D. and Robbins, K. (1993), ‘No place like Heimat: Images of Home(land) in European Culture’ in Carter, E, Donald, J. and Squires, J., (eds) *Space and Place. Theories of identity and location*, Lawrence Wishart London, p. 9.

⁴⁰ Cinnirella, M. (1998), ‘Exploring temporal aspects of social identity: the concept of possible social identities’, *European Journal of Social Psychology*, 28, pp.227-248, p.232.

for it that he does'.⁴¹ Memory can be obscure to identity whenever we try to refer to a specific event that we claim to remember. John Perry illustrates this particularity of memory in a very successful way: 'most of us remember that Columbus discovered America in 1492. We wouldn't miss that question on an exam. But no one now alive remembers Columbus discovering America'.⁴² In most cases of event memory, history appears to be the solution and the problem at the same time. According to what history sources we follow, we are able to enforce or weaken our memory. In many cases of history of events (I use the term history here as a means of creation of collective memory), we have encountered cases of organised memory or organised oblivion. In this case, recollection of the past becomes in Barry Schwartz's words 'an active, constructive process'.⁴³ Václav Havel described in a letter sent to Czech President Gustav Husák in 1975 the psychological effects of 'an imposed official history that bears little resemblance to what people remember'.⁴⁴

According to the above, the relationship between identity and memory fluctuates between real memory (what we actually remember), claimed memory (what we claim to recollect) and imposed memory (what others want us to commemorate). Real and claimed memories are the self's own memories, which have been influenced by imposed, and constructive memory. In Pierre Nora's words 'on the one hand we find an integrated, dictatorial memory' (the imposed memory) and 'on the other hand our memory, nothing more in fact than sifted and sorted historical traces'.⁴⁵ Clearly an individual's memory is bound to be influenced by the collective group's memory she/he belongs to. An individual's claimed memory is not her/his real memory since 'culturally embedded traditions of storytelling and recurring narrative structures affect the manner in which individuals recount their life-stories'.⁴⁶

My approach to the uses of memory in this section is close to recent approaches to memory and identity that recognise the instrumentality of memory selection related to the writing (or editing) of history. Although past theories on identity and memory did not seem critical to the relations between history and memory recent approaches are. Postmodernists have challenged the 'truth-claim' of professional historiography' by stressing the difference between knowledge/truth and interpretation.⁴⁷ Memory and history are neither given nor natural but they are instead constructive (or constructed) ways of conveying cultural identity to the self. In that sense memory is shaped by the needs of a particular elite. History is edited and 'written by people in the present for particular purposes and the selection and interpretation of 'sources' are always arbitrary'.⁴⁸ Recent studies of memory concentrate also on what Foucault called 'counter-memories' referring to memories

⁴¹ Shoemaker, S. (1978), 'Personal Identity and Memory' in Perry, J. *Personal Identity*, University of California Press, p.128.

⁴² Perry, J. (1975), *Personal Identity*, University of California Press, p.144.

⁴³ Schwartz, B. (1982), 'The Social Context of Commemoration: A Study in Collective Memory', *Social Forces*, Volume 61:2, p.374.

⁴⁴ Koonz, C. (1994), 'Between memory and oblivion: concentration camps in German Memory' in Gillis, J.R. (ed) *Commemorations. The Politics of national identity*, Princeton University Press, p.258.

⁴⁵ Nora, P. (1989), 'Between memory and history: Les lieux de mémoire', *Representations*, 26: 7-25, p.8.

⁴⁶ Cinnirella, M. (1998), 'Exploring temporal aspects of social identity: the concept of possible social identities', *European Journal of Social Psychology*, 28, pp.227-248, p.235.

⁴⁷ Olick, J. and Robbins, J. (1998), 'Social memory studies: from 'collective memory' to the historical sociology of mnemonic practices', *Annual Review of Sociology*, 24:105-40, p.110.

⁴⁸ Olick, J. and Robbins, J. (1998), 'Social memory studies: from 'collective memory' to the historical sociology of mnemonic practices', *Annual Review of Sociology*, 24:105-40, p.110.

that challenge traditional discourses.⁴⁹ Clearly current postmodern thought ‘is far too allergic to nostalgia’.⁵⁰ Postmodernism behaves towards history not as ‘the real but as representation, as pastiche’.⁵¹

Let us see now to what extent the EU follows current patterns of memory understanding. Officials working for the European Institutions in their everyday internal practices deal with time within their administrative culture in such a way that memory is somehow ignored. In the culture of the European Commission ‘everything happens as if Europe will be inventing itself every day’.⁵² Occasionally within EU administration, there might be references to the history of the EU with particular notice of the founding fathers.⁵³ But overall it is not customary to refer to one’s memory within the EU administration rationale. However, outside Euro-bureaucracy the EU represented by the European Commission’s cultural policy discourse has invented a somehow new memory for its citizens of a supposedly existing shared past. This is the memory of a European common cultural heritage. This memory is indeed new since it does not apply to what EU citizens would usually refer to as their memory, which is identified with their respective nations, regions or small towns. Hence although within the Commission any reference to tradition or history is irrelevant or limited to the reminiscence of the founding fathers outside of it across the citizens’ Europe a new memory is being constructed. This new memory design seems to be following, not surprisingly enough, patterns of national history shaping.

Consequently, from a postmodern spatial understanding the EU seems to ignore the postmodern understanding of memory and opts for an almost modern pattern of collective memory and consequently group identity building. The memory the EU uses is omnipresent throughout EU cultural policy discourse (mainly) where the EU acting as similar attempts to recruit the self (EU citizen) to its group identity (EU-ropean identity) convincing her/him of a supposedly shared and common past or heritage. This heritage is the one ‘Europe’ experienced through its supposedly shared past. Using history in a rather essentialist and located sense as a tool to build EU-ropean identities is a rather problematic strategy for the EU. It has to do with what Maryon McDonald calls the ‘old package’ when referring to old and located ways of conceptualising European identity which ‘no longer pertain in a world of diversity and relativism’.⁵⁴ The ‘old package’ debate reminds me of the issue of located and dislocated identities. The history of Europe starting with Greek and Roman antiquities and following up stages of Europe’s moments of glory or crisis is a rather essentialist approach and very much located in specific time and space. This historical journey is about providing a series of events that took place in the narrowly defined European area (which is usually nowadays commonly defined as swinging from the Atlantic to the Urals). However, I could not agree more with Maryon McDonald’s view that there is also another history of Europe, the history of a European identity that travelled around the world and mixed itself with other cultures due to mobility and

⁴⁹ Olick, J. and Robbins, J. (1998), ‘Social memory studies: from ‘collective memory’ to the historical sociology of mnemonic practices’, *Annual Review of Sociology*, 24:105-40, p.126.

⁵⁰ Eagleton, T. (2000), ‘Versions of culture’ in *The idea of Culture*, Blackwell, p.21.

⁵¹ Sarup, M. (1996), *Identity, Culture and the Postmodern world*, Edited by Raja, T., Edinburgh University Press, p.95.

⁵² Abélès, M. (2000), ‘Virtual Europe’ in Bellier, I. and Wilson, T. (eds.), *An Anthropology of the European Union. Building, Imagining and Experiencing the New Europe*, Berg, p.33.

⁵³ This information is a result of informal conversations I had with Eurocrats working in DG external relations in June 2002 in Brussels.

⁵⁴ McDonald, M. (1999), ‘European identity-an anthropological approach’ in Jansen, T. (ed), *Reflections on European Identity*, Working Paper, European Commission, Forward Studies Unit, p.78.

colonisation.⁵⁵ This has rather to do with Europe's journey of spreading its identity around the globe. Europe has 'left its mark over the whole globe, but it has also proved to have a voracious appetite itself, being perfectly capable of absorbing influences from all over the world and positively devouring foreign ideas'.⁵⁶

Traditional, essentialist and historical tools in building European identity are clearly no longer valid norms in contemporary European identity building and indeed within the EU. In any case there are a series of other elements that can construct European identity today that are far from 'traditional elements that constitute collective identities, such as religion, education, literature, arts and local myths'.⁵⁷ These new elements of identity construction that could also apply to European identity might include newly invented 'mythologies, technological advances and new definitions of security'.⁵⁸ Building EU-ropean identity by using Europe's past and history is like using located forms of identity understanding. It is almost as if EU-ropean identity was something located in Europe's past, something that exists and is out there and all the EU needs to do is dig it out, bring it to light and strengthen it. However, EU-ropean identity is rather a process, still in its initial phase. This type of identity 'will not be found in wonderful words about our common history and common sources of inspiration, not in digging up long forgotten treasures of the past but in acting together'.⁵⁹

To sum up, both sections on space and memory in EU identity building co-exist without necessarily being entirely compatible. The analysis of space versus memory as a means for EU identity building has brought to the fore the existing dichotomy between modern and postmodern means of identity construction. The co-existence of space and memory as techniques that are used for collective identity shaping may be problematic for the EU in particular. EU citizens are very much attached to a national rather than a European past that the nation state has shaped over the years for them based on the principle of sameness. Although the EU does not talk about a same past but a shared past based also on diversity, hence although the EU adopts similarity instead of sameness, citizens seem to find it still hard to abide to this supposedly shared past.⁶⁰ Space might be an easier and less controversial means to construct identity since it is based rather on current needs and contemporary structures and activities and is indeed open to change and can be viewed as a work on progress.

⁵⁵ McDonald, M. (1999), 'European identity-an anthropological approach' in Jansen, T. (ed), *Reflections on European Identity*, Working Paper, European Commission, Forward Studies Unit, p.79.

⁵⁶ De Weck, R. (1999), 'Neither Reich no Nation-another future for the European Union' in Jansen, T. (ed), *Reflections on European Identity*, Working Paper, European Commission, Forward Studies Unit, p.109.

⁵⁷ Garcia, S. (1992), *Europe's fragmentation. Identities and the frontiers of citizenship*, RIIA Discussion Papers 45, The Royal Institute of International Affairs, p.12.

⁵⁸ Garcia, S. (1992), *Europe's fragmentation. Identities and the frontiers of citizenship*, RIIA Discussion Papers 45, The Royal Institute of International Affairs, p.12.

⁵⁹ Korthals Altes, E. (1999), 'What is it? Why do we need it? Where do we find it?' in Jansen, T. (ed), *Reflections on European Identity*, Working Paper, European Commission, Forward Studies Unit, p.55.

⁶⁰ Citizens' attitude to the EU is depicted in Eurobarometer survey results where it is clear that they tend to have a much stronger allegiance to national identity rather than a European (or indeed EU-ropean) one.

EU cultural policy and the discourses on space and memory.

So far I have discussed from a theoretical perspective how space and memory appear as strategies for EU identity building. In order to study how space and memory are discussed and promoted at EU cultural policy level it is essential to first present EU cultural policy actions. EU cultural policy actions refer to specific instruments the EU uses with regard to its cultural policy activities, the bodies involved and the means applied for the realisation of the policy's cultural objectives. EU cultural policy instruments are summarised to the EU specific budget lines for culture, the EU funded programmes and projects that operate for cultural creativity and performance as well as specific events and initiatives. EU cultural policy instruments are supported by specific bodies the EU uses for the fulfilment of its cultural policy objectives. Such bodies include both EU internal (i.e. EU Institutions) and external (Council of Europe, NGOs, cultural networks) actors. Means of promoting EU cultural policy activities regard practices such as mobility, exchange and transnationality.

EU cultural policy instruments.

The EU promotes and organises its cultural policy through the use of specific instruments, which are summarised to the allocation of EU budget, the set up of specific programmes and projects for culture, and the organisation of events in the cultural area. An analysis of EU cultural policy instruments reveals the existing identity building strategies, which are part of the activities' rationale. Since the year 2000, the EU has adopted a clear and sole instrument for the promotion of culture which figures under the heading 'First Framework Programme for Culture' or most often called 'Culture 2000'.

The priorities of Culture 2000 concentrate mostly on the promotion of heritage and European history and legacy. For instance, priorities for the year 2001 included the strengthening of the European cultural heritage, the encouragement of artistic and literary creation, the promotion of mutual knowledge on the history and peoples of Europe and the support of the work of Giuseppe Verdi given that 2001 was the anniversary of 100 years since his death.⁶¹ It is clear that most of these objectives tend to give priority to a European past (whether this is phrased as history, heritage or other) rather than contemporary creation.

The European city of culture initiative is another good example of how heritage plays an important role within Culture 2000. The European city of culture event was adopted in order to promote 'cultural awareness' presenting a city's cultural heritage while concentrating on the organisation of artistic events based on a specific European theme.⁶² 'A European city of Culture is selected each year to 'organise a cultural project on a specific, European theme, possibly in association with other European cities'.⁶³ The aim of this particular project (which is part of the Framework programme Culture 2000 but which has existed as an action since 1985) is to draw

⁶¹ European Commission (2001), *Culture 2000. The programme's priorities for 2001*.

⁶² European Commission (1997), 'Proposal for a European Parliament and Council decision establishing a Community initiative for the 'European city of culture' event COM (97) 549 final', *Official Journal*, C 362, 28/11/1997, p.0012.

⁶³ Although in the beginning of the project there was one city to be selected in 2000 there were 9 European cities of culture. European Commission (1997), 'Proposal for a European Parliament and Council decision establishing a Community initiative for the 'European city of culture' event COM (97) 549 final', *Official Journal*, C 362, 28/11/1997, p.0012.

attention ‘to the cultural wealth and diversity of European cities by highlighting their common cultural heritage’.⁶⁴ It has been noted that ‘the European Capital of Culture is an important event for the development of the cultural dimension within the Union’.⁶⁵ All Commission quotes stress the importance of heritage within the cities of culture rationale.

Consequently, an analysis of Culture 2000 actions reveals the importance of heritage, which is being encouraged, promoted and supported throughout the programmes’ activities. Whether this heritage regards natural landscapes, architectural legacies, musical performance, literary pieces or the promotion of a city, this indeed is a heritage, which has mainly references to tradition, history and the past. This is closely linked to what has been identified so far as a vertical heritage (or memory) of collective identity. A closer look at specific projects that have been funded under the framework programme since its initial phase (i.e. since 2000) demonstrates the inclusion of some contemporary practices as well. Along with promotion of the past, history, legacy and tradition, there is also interest in the encouragement of current products of contemporary art and creativity. However, there seem to be fewer projects that promote contemporary practices than projects, which have strong references to the past.

It is clear that at Culture 2000 level identity is perceived through the awareness of a common past, which is brought to the fore thanks to co-operation. According to such EU understanding, identity is conceived as shared, common and located in a European past. Whereas co-operation and exchange are seen as the main means to reach the end of extensive knowledge and strong awareness of a common heritage.

Overall, projects that are supported through EU cultural policy budget make references to identity building. Collective identity is supported through the means of mobility and exchange, which contribute to the slow but steady shaping of a EU-ropean area of exchange, a cultural space. This space makes allusions to the horizontal heritage debate. However, the analysis of the themes that instruments use for their activities are mainly targeted towards past experiences and promote high culture products while having certain elitist tendencies. The networks that have been set up through co-operation within Culture 2000 would rather promote the preservation of high, elitist and past heritage products rather than popular, folk and multicultural practices. Clearly, these actors tend to follow objectives that have been set up already by EU cultural policy bodies whose role is prominent in the results EU cultural policy brings.

⁶⁴ European Commission (2000), ‘European cities of Culture’, *Le Magazine*, No 13, p.12.

⁶⁵ European Parliament (2001), *Report on the European Capital of Culture 2005*, Committee on Culture, Youth, Education, the Media and Sport, Rapporteur: Giuseppe Gargani, 27 November 2001.

Promotion of identity through EU cultural policy instruments: the European cultural heritage.

Overall, EU funded projects and organisations tend to promote rather high culture as opposed to popular and minority cultures. With few exceptions, multicultural and minority issues as well as popular cultures are quite underrepresented. Themes such as social exclusion, gender inequality, ethnic minorities and multiculturalism, which are currently positioned as key issues for identity discussion, are rarely taken into consideration.

As far as projects that were funded between 1996 and 2000 are concerned, the areas that were covered included music, opera, dance, theatre, visual and applied arts, literature, archaeology, cultural heritage and architectural/urban development.⁶⁶ As it results from an overview of projects that were funded under different programmes before Culture 2000 (mainly Kaleidoscope, Ariane and Raphael), a large part of the themes represented regarded the so-called high arts. The majority of music projects concentrated on classical music themes although there were also projects that promoted ethnic and traditional or popular music but these were not numerous. Dance and theatre themes concentrated on the promotion of traditional choreographic trends giving priority rather to myths, and big classics rather than contemporary aspects of creativity and performance. Whereas projects that were funded under the cultural heritage heading included initiatives on migration and identity while also giving priority to projects that promoted 'European myths and legends'. In that perspective identity is based on construction of a common European past.

Overall, the overview of EU cultural policy instruments demonstrates that the EU gives priority to the building of identity based on raising awareness about the shared heritage and common high culture practices. To the EU rationale EU citizens are supposedly 'Europeans' because they share a common cultural heritage based on the 'crème de la crème' of elitist and culture themes that regard classical music, great moments of architecture and classical theatre or dance. The notion of the European cultural heritage is omnipresent in EU cultural policy debates. The promotion of such a heritage is clearly pronounced as a main goal of EU cultural policy activities. The instruments that the EU uses towards that end regard mainly the encouragement of projects that promote the shared past cultural heritage from a historical perspective.

Heritage amounts a rather large area of EU cultural policy actions since '34 % of the total budget earmarked for the Culture 2000 programme had been allocated to 'heritage' in the widest sense'.⁶⁷ The EU has clearly stated that the conservation and safeguard of cultural heritage of European significance was indeed one of the main goals of the EU's cultural policy.⁶⁸ During a speech given recently by Viviane Reding, Commissioner for Education and Culture, the common cultural heritage figured as the first and most important feature of EU cultural policy.⁶⁹ Whereas heritage is the tool for identity since in most of EU elite's speeches the

⁶⁶ European Commission (2001), 'Examples of project themes supported by European cultural action (1996-2000)', *Cultural Co-operation in Europe. Forum 2001*.

⁶⁷ European Commission (2000), *Bulletin*, EU 1/2-200, Education and culture (11/14).

⁶⁸ European Commission (2000), 'Culture: current state and prospects' *Activities of the European union*, europa server <http://www.europa.eu.int> (accessed on 28 August 2002).

⁶⁹ European Commission (2001), 'L'Europe doit construire des ponts entre les cultures' déclaration de Viviane Reding au Conseil des ministres de la Culture', Press Release MEMO/01/352, 6 November 2001.

notion of heritage is almost invariably identified with cultural policy, identity and diversity.⁷⁰

One of the main objectives of the framework programme for culture as phrased by the Commission's statement on Culture 2000 is to 'improve the knowledge and dissemination of the culture and history of the European peoples'.⁷¹ This has clear references to a shared European past. Most of the activities concentrate on the awareness of a supposedly shared past. 'The numerous photographic collections kept in museums and archive centres throughout Europe constitute incalculably valuable evidence of the European past'.⁷²

As it results from a brief analysis of EU cultural policy instruments identity exists as an objective of cultural policy actions. Creativity and identity are promoted mostly at European heritage, legacy and tradition levels. The themes selected by organisations, the subjects chosen for projects and the activities that are promoted picture identity as part of a high arts, rather elitist and located in the past perspectives. Whereas identity practices that regard multiculturalism, gender and ethnic issues and other aspects of identity promoting difference as celebrated through postmodernism are nearly ignored. Overall, EU cultural policy instruments (programmes, projects, events) promote identity construction at vertical heritage level. However, the means that are used for the promotion of such identity are indeed horizontal.

Means used for the promotion of EU cultural policy actions.

Unlike EU cultural policy instruments, which promote identity through vertical heritage, the means the EU uses to its ends are horizontal. The promotion of European heritage in the Commission's view is successful only through co-operation and exchange, which are identified as horizontal practices. The Commission has identified its means of action in the area of culture as mobility, exchange (of ideas, practices, intercultural dialogue), support of transnational co-operation and European organisations.⁷³ The means the EU uses in the promotion of its cultural policy actions can be characterised as encouragement of the emergence of a European cultural space, which is closely linked, to the idea of a horizontal heritage. Such means involve transnational co-operation, mobility and the creation of a European civil society in the cultural area.

Transnational co-operation regards the set up of networks. The main aim of Culture 2000 is 'to help and encourage citizens and cultural organisations to set up cultural co-operation projects with a strong European dimension and added value'.⁷⁴ The European dimension of projects stresses the transnational aspect of cultural policy means. Transnationality equals co-operation through the formation of a network or consortium. In order to participate in any of the programmes launched under cultural action objectives, the set up of a network is essential. As most

⁷⁰ For more details on how heritage is used in the EU context see next chapter on the discourse of EU cultural policy.

⁷¹ European Commission (2000), 'Culture: current state and prospects' *Activities of the European union*, europa server <http://www.europa.eu.int> (accessed on 28 August 2002). See also European Commission (2000), 'Decision No 508/2000/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 14 February 2000 establishing the Culture 2000 programme', *Official Journal*, L 63, 10/03/2000, p.2.

⁷² European Commission (2002), *European culture portal*, europa server.

⁷³ European Commission (2000), *Guide to programmes and actions. Education and Culture*, p.5.

⁷⁴ European Commission (2000), 'The Culture 2000 programme: adoption, implementation and priorities', *Le Magazine*, No 13, p.10.

Community programmes, Culture 2000 operates in the form of projects which are organised by at least three different bodies or associations (coming from three different countries), which may be eligible for financing of between 50,000 and 150,000 €. ⁷⁵ The long-term networks may operate for up to three years but must engage five actors receiving funding of up to 300,000 € per year. ⁷⁶ Through Culture 2000 actions, the EU consistently and growingly supports the set up of European networks. In the case of Culture 2000 these are supported for a short period of time whereas certain networks' existence is longer and hence their identity impact seems more valid. Such networks are usually the result of structured and multiannual co-operation agreements, which originated from Culture 2000. The European network for Art Nouveau for instance was established in 1999 'to link up public and private institutions in 11 European countries' with an aim to promote various aspects of this movement. ⁷⁷ Under line A- 3042 cultural networks such as the Informal European Theatre Meeting, Europa Nostra or European League of Institutes for the Arts identify themselves as European information sources on cultural issues, intercultural fora of exchange and lobby groups, which have existed since the 1990s.

Such transnational co-operation and network activity contribute to the formation of a European cultural space. The emergence of the European cultural space is largely supported through mobility. Mobility has become not only a EU common practice but also a widely used word within the EU jargon generally referring to movement of people and their products within the Union. In a cultural framework, mobility refers to the movement of artists, creators and other cultural operators and professionals as well as their works. ⁷⁸ In cultural terms, mobility plays a significant role in the dissemination of culture, intercultural exchange and knowledge about other cultures. The EU has invariably stressed its focus to 'the mobility, training and employment of professionals since the EU tends to believe that mobility raises awareness of the shared heritage. ⁷⁹

Extensive, long and consistent practices that promote co-operation and network function while ensuring their continuity strengthen the transnational aspect of identity. Transnationality, co-operation and involvement of more actors in the field brings to the fore the emergence of a European civil society. The support for the emergence of a European civil society on cultural affairs involves EU extensive encouragement of external factors' (such as networks' and NGOs') inclusion and involvement in a larger European cultural space. The EU succeeds in bringing these factors closer to one another and to European Institutions through information dissemination activities, along with the organisation of conferences and an open debate on culture.

Dissemination of information about the EU cultural policy field is mainly provided through the Internet. The Europa server is a great source of information concerning EU cultural policy objectives, administration, legislation, and programmes' implementation available to all citizens. Given the fact that information

⁷⁵ Ruffolo, G. (2001), 'Introduction' in The Parliamentary group of the PSE, European Parliament, *The Unity of diversities. Cultural co-operation in the European Union*, Angelo Pontecorboli Editore, Firenze, p.16.

⁷⁶ Ruffolo, G. (2001), 'Introduction' in The Parliamentary group of the PSE, European Parliament, *The Unity of diversities. Cultural co-operation in the European Union*, Angelo Pontecorboli Editore, Firenze, p.16.

⁷⁷ European Commission (2000), 'The Culture 2000 programme: adoption, implementation and priorities', *Le Magazine*, No 13, p.11.

⁷⁸ European Commission (2000), *Guide to programmes and actions. Education and Culture*, p.53.

⁷⁹ European Commission (2002), *European culture portal*, europa server.

on culture was identified as scattered, disorganised and not fully detailed in the past, the 'Europe and Culture portal' was launched in March 2002. The portal is described as 'a simple online information tool in five languages designed for anyone interested in European Union actions in the cultural field'.⁸⁰ The information that the portal provides includes details on the themes promoted, on the EU instruments of cultural policy, on legislation and on identity issues. There is indeed a section on how cultural heritage is the vehicle of cultural identity.⁸¹

Since summer 2001, the European Commission's goal towards a strengthening of European society triggered the set up of a new database named 'Coneccs (Consultation, European Commission and Civil Society)'.⁸² The database provides information on the existing NGOs across Europe that offer consulting services to the European Institutions, mainly the Commission. In December 2001, there were 61 organisations listed under culture including the Association of European radios, European folk culture organisation, Confederation of the European music industries, International Federation of actors etc.⁸³

A series of conferences, workshops and seminars have been organised as a European Commission's or Parliament's initiative in order to promote further exchange of opinion on cultural affairs, discuss policy challenges and trigger intercultural dialogue which is one of the current EU objectives which cultural policy needs to support. Examples of such conferences and seminars range from workshops on music to large intercultural dialogue conferences or even the Convention's plenary sessions. In order to promote further dialogue and exchange in traditional music, two seminars have been organised for October 2001 and October 2002 on the multicultural European approach of traditional music.⁸⁴ A conference on intercultural dialogue took place in Brussels on 20 and 21 March 2002 in order to carry out an in-depth analysis of the various aspects of inter-cultural dialogue, and to come up with practical conclusions which were presented to the Euro-Mediterranean meeting held in Valencia from 22 to 23 April 2002. The Convention's plenary session with the Civil Society on 24-25 June 2002 gave some (although limited) time to discuss cultural issues in a framework of social Europe.⁸⁵ Pilot projects such as the symposium on the history of the European peoples and cultural heritage of European importance have supported EU cultural policy objectives.⁸⁶

Since the 1990s, the EU has extensively supported the opening and enlargement of the debate area on culture by incorporating more organisations that are part of a cultural area. Consequently, the EU recognised the importance not only of UNESCO and the Council of Europe but also of other cultural organisations such as the European Cultural Foundation and cultural networks or NGOs. To this action one should also add of course the EU extensive financial support of cultural networks

⁸⁰ European Forum for the Arts and Heritage (2002), 'Miscellaneous on cultural matters', *Newsletter*, No 14, 17 April 2002.

⁸¹ http://www.europa.eu.int/comm/culture/patri_vecteur_en.htm (accessed on 3 September 2002).

⁸² Information currently existing in the europa server and can be accessed at http://europa.eu.int/comm/civil_society/coneccc/ (accessed on 3 December 2001).

⁸³ Information currently existing in the europa server and can be accessed at http://europa.eu.int/comm/civil_society/coneccc/ (accessed on 3 December 2001).

⁸⁴ European Commission (2001), 'Culture 2000, an II. Musiques et danses traditionnelles en réseau', *Le Magazine*, No 14.

⁸⁵ European Forum for the Arts and Heritage (2002), 'Convention', *Newsletter*, 7 July 2002 and 'Culture and Civil Society', *Newsletter*, 13 June 2002.

⁸⁶ European Forum for the Arts and Heritage (1999), 'Council of Ministers', *Culture Alert*, No 16, April 1999.

since 1992. Such organisations have signed agreements of further co-operation with the EU or with one another in order to engage in a dialogue with the European Institutions and raise awareness on the problems and challenges in the field.⁸⁷ Furthermore, informal task forces among cultural networks have been formed with the view to discuss the problems with Culture 2000 and find new alternative models for EU cultural policy that would respond more adequately to the needs of artists, cultural operators and would embrace issues such as social exclusion and multiculturalism.⁸⁸

EU cultural policy means tend to promote identity through the support of a European cultural space rather than European past heritage which was the case for EU cultural policy instruments. Mobility, civil society and transnational structures, which are used as means to achieve the success of instruments, have a strong identity building reference.

Promotion of identity through EU cultural policy means: the European cultural space.

The creation of a European cultural space has been identified as an important objective among the Commission's plan as it is outlined throughout EU cultural projects and activities. The Commission has stressed as one of its main aims the need to 'promote a common cultural area for European citizens and to support co-operation between the artists, cultural operators and cultural institutions of the member states'.⁸⁹

This kind of common cultural area does not have any historical references at all and is very different from the debate on the common and shared European cultural heritage. The European cultural space regards co-operation and exchange, which are strengthened through mobility and transnational practices. The European Parliament and the Council have noted that the Community is committed 'to working towards the development of a cultural area common to the European people, which is open, varied and founded on the principle of subsidiarity, [and] co-operation between all those involved in the cultural sector'.⁹⁰ Following the theoretical background presented in the beginning of this article regarding space versus memory and horizontal versus vertical heritages, the common cultural area is identified with a horizontal heritage, i.e. a postmodern space. Co-operation, exchange of practice among artists and cultural operators encourages the creation of networks and the bringing together of shared practices while supporting common goals. Exchange and co-operation supported by increased mobility strengthens horizontal heritage practices where transnational procedures are to be promoted more than national memory traditions. This kind of heritage is indeed horizontal since it responds to the bringing together of people and practices of the same time (contemporary) but from different backgrounds. It responds to postmodern space rationale because of its a-territoriality, its inability to be fixed within specific physical frontiers and its continuous flexibility to be changed due to enlargement.

⁸⁷ This results from conversations I had with the Secretary General and Project Manager of the European Cultural Foundation in Amsterdam in January 2002 and the Secretary General of EFAH in Brussels during three meetings in June and July 2002.

⁸⁸ This results from conversations with members of such task forces and consultation of their internal documents, meeting's agendas and draft proposals.

⁸⁹ European Forum for the Arts and Heritage (1999), 'At the Commission', *Culture Alerte*, No 16, April 1999.

⁹⁰ European Commission (2000), 'Decision No 508/2000/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 14 February 2000 establishing the Culture 2000 programme', *Official Journal*, L 63, 10/03/2000, p.1.

The kind of identity that is promoted through EU cultural space is based on the experience of intercultural dialogue and exchange. The actors involved in such exchange acquire knowledge about the other, strengthen the understanding of the self through the encounter with the other. The European space is a flexible tool for a-local, changeable, fluid aspect of identity, which responds to postmodern tendencies. The European space exists and is constantly developed. One network generates another, large networks trigger smaller sub-networks and informal means of co-operation. These are indeed practices that underline contemporary understanding of identity. Such practices however work on the basis of the strengthening of an essentialist, located, unchanged and fixed identity rationale. Consequently, horizontal postmodern identity strategies are generated and encouraged in order to support vertical, fixed modern identity mechanisms.

Conclusions: horizontal versus vertical heritages in a EU perspective.

I argued in this article that EU identity building strategies can be discussed from a discourse perspective that lies on two different and rather controversial notions: European horizontal postmodern space and European vertical modern heritage. I also argued that EU cultural policy actions seem to promote vertical heritage activities by using horizontal heritage means. Activities that are supported under EU cultural policy actions whether these are events, programmes, initiatives, etc., tend to rather focus on the promotion of past experiences and the conservation of a historical heritage than the promotion of current practices and contemporary works of art. Furthermore, activities are focused towards high culture products and creativity events, which could be identified as rather elitist.

The EU's objective to raise awareness among citizens of a supposedly shared and common heritage hidden in Europe's past responds to the EU's hope to trigger the creation of European identity. Hence, activities that bring this common heritage to the fore are mostly germane to the EU understanding of identity in terms of a vertical heritage and need to be further encouraged. The means that are used for such activities however are closely linked to the horizontal heritage. Promotion of the past is taking place only through transnational practices, co-operation, exchange and intercultural dialogue taking place in the present. The aim is to encourage the creation of a 'European cultural area', as the European Parliament underlined in its resolution of 5 September 2001 on cultural cooperation in Europe.⁹¹ The European cultural area refers to a common horizontal space. Co-operation agreements, co-productions, mobility of artists or mobility of events (such as circulation of works and other cultural events within the EU) as well as exchange of experience through training are ways of operation that promote the horizontal heritage hence a postmodern based space. The events and objects that these practices promote are however targeted towards the vertical heritage hence a modern based memory.

Consequently, EU cultural policy instruments are by large targeted towards a European common past whereas the means to achieve instruments include factors that are part of a European current area. It is as if contemporary 'Europeans' are working together in order to bring to light their common past. However, it has already been noted that for the majority of EU citizens there is no allegiance to a shared European past. There is instead faith and loyalty to a national, regional or local past, which has been constructed throughout the years as the only 'natural' memory of

⁹¹ European Commission (2002), *European culture portal*, europa server.

the citizens. It is hence clear that although citizens in their majority enjoy co-operation, exchange of practices and intercultural dialogue, they do not necessarily accept the existence of a European past. Their past remains national (or even regional or local) whereas co-operation and exchange are contemporary means to build a common future. In that respect the EU rationale of bringing citizens together in order to make them aware of their common past might not be entirely successful and might generate reactions especially from those countries which tend to put stronger efforts towards the promotion of their national past heritage concerning their cultural affairs. As it is demonstrated through an analysis of national cultural policies, within the EU-15 there are indeed large discrepancies as to whether past heritage or current/contemporary actions are put forward as priorities.

Generally speaking citizens tend to follow horizontal heritage practices without major problems. Cross-cultural co-operation through mobility and transnational co-operation through specific projects and actions have been assessed as thriving practices.⁹² Especially with regard to exchange education programmes or co-operation in research and development, mobility and teamwork have been achieved rather successfully.⁹³ However, vertical heritage issues may provoke reactions since they refer to the past, which to most is yet national not European and is a largely fragile issue. Hence, although not many problems with horizontal heritage practices have been encountered, troubles with vertical heritage have existed. The Greek delegation of the Council of the EU expressed their concern on the concept of a Museum of Europe which was a project launched by a private Belgian association.⁹⁴ The project was criticised by the Greek delegation, which found that the set up of the Museum of Europe ignored the importance of the Greek cultural and historical heritage as part of a European heritage museum. Furthermore, European music organisations that bring together musicians from all EU countries have noted that national priorities (regarding repertoire, number of musicians from each country and choice of educators) could hinder the success of the high quality of performance. In many cases respect for 'geographical distribution' (EU jargon for representation from all member states) poses many problems for the quality of products and events whereas allegiance to a national past triggers blockage with the successful achievement of projects.⁹⁵

It has already been noted that both national and European heritages are indeed constructed notions. Elites use such practices invariably as tools for the strengthening of collective identity. It is clear that national heritage is stronger than European at the moment (although for certain cases regional or local is even stronger than national) since it has been classified as more consistent, more natural and more secure. It has been noted already that although current identity practices are indeed changeable, unfixed and fluid for most citizens in the Union the need for roots is

⁹² This is the opinion of both cultural operators that have received funding under co-operation agreements and transnational projects and the Technical Assistance Offices of DG EAC, which follow closely transnational co-operation statistics.

⁹³ See for example the growing number of mobility with regard to the SOCRATES programme or the mobility of Researchers through TMR and Marie Curie Fellowships. Figures seem to grow annually since the set up of these programmes. This information results from my work experience as an expert in the Technical Assistance Office of Socrates, Leonardo and Youth between 1998 and 2002 in Brussels.

⁹⁴ Council of the European Union (1999), '2221st Council meeting, Cultural/Audiovisual affairs, Brussels, 23 November 1999', President: Suvi Linden, Minister for Culture of the Republic of Finland.

⁹⁵ This results from conversations I had with European music organisations' management and European cultural networks.

rather strong and their understanding of identity is rather essentialist. Most EU citizens were born and lived all their lives within the framework of a heritage which they are happy with and hence can accept any other alternative with great difficulty.