12 Memory activism, resilience and reconciliation

Heritage is a collective act that is a memorial position on history: deciding today (in a particular context) what tomorrow will have to remember of the past, or what it will be able to forget (an event, object, building, figure, tradition, etc.). Thus, it is a story, a construct, a choice. However, every story evolves according to current issues, knowledge, and sensitivities in the name of this 'reversed filiation'[724]. Therefore, the heritage regime is therefore not a linear, downward, mechanical transmission: it is based on this freedom to preserve, destroy, and reconstitute. The heritage dynamic moves dialectically between commemoration, 'De-commemoration' and 'Re-commemoration'[725]. This is why, contrary to the widely-held notion, heritage is a social reality in a state of constant flux and is itself historical and archivable.

The most noteworthy contemporary fact, which has aroused the interest of researchers and social science experts, has been the steady rise of heritage as a social and identity issue, a factor in economic and territorial development, a point of geopolitical crystallisation or a demand for a critical rereading of history to bring out 'dominated' memories and promote values (anti-racism, inclusion, democracy, etc.). What we are now witnessing is a gradual expansion of heritage to include natural goods and intangible goods in addition to 'cultural' goods. At the same time, heritage has been accredited with a new function: that of 'resilience'.

Emerging at the same time as the development of the ethics of 'care' and the advent of the 'victim' in history in the 1970s, the notion of 'resilience' has gradually pervaded the human and social sciences. Recently, it has incorporated the discourse on heritage and its supposed virtues. Widely-held opinion and cultural institutions (such as UNESCO) willingly provide the heritage approach with potential for consolation, reconciliation, and 're-synchronisation'. Today, 'dominated' (or outlying) memories see it as a source of *reparation*, both in terms of memory and material terms. It inspires social and political actors in territories that have been the victims

724 See Note 63 of this book.

725 Tracy Adams et Yinon Guttel-Klein, 'Make it Till you Break It: Toward a Typology of De-Commemoration', *Sociological Forum,* vol. 37, n° 2, June 2022, p. 603–625.

of brutal change. After a disruptive event, *heritage action* would make it possible to restore ties to heal and prevent the worst, ward off suffering or loss, and finally, resist the fatality of history in order to face the future with greater success. For example, on 23 May 2024, the United Nations established an International Day to Commemorate the Srebrenica Genocide (July 1995) to encourage 'reconciliation, now and for the future'. This is what I might call the supposedly 'conjuring effect' of heritagisation.

Behind this consensus that is forming around the requirement of resilience as a new imperative is the promotion of protection as an ultimate, almost sacred, value. We have come to consider cultural protection a human right like Pope Francis, who, in his general address on November 30, 2016, welcomed the conference on endangered heritage (initiated by France and the United Arab Emirates) based on his belief that 'the protection of cultural wealth constitutes an essential dimension of the defence of the human being'. With the growth in environmental awareness, the 'rights' of nature (landscapes, fauna, flora) play an ever more active role in this process of reconstitution and repair. Even the 'rewilding' of forests, for example, has been equated with a heritage 'revolution': 'Where we thought only of destroying, we are beginning to rebuild.'[726] Reconstruction involves more than just building. We are witnessing the promotion of a secularised culture of the relic and of the sanctuary that must lead man to be reconciled with 'nature'. It is this myth of resilience as a force for reconciliation and protection that we wish to examine.

'Resilience' as a marker of a change in the relationship to memory

'Resilience' is a multi-referential notion that has its origins in mechanical science but which has gradually pervaded the humanities and social sciences.[727] Contemporaneous with the development of the ethics of 'care'[728] and the advent of the 'victim' in history, the term has recently entered common usage. Recently, the concept of resilience has become part of the

726 Gilbert Cochet, Béatrice Kremer-Cochet, *L'Europe réensauvagée. Vers un nouveau monde*, Actes Sud, Babel, 2020, p. 92.

727 Amélie Nillus, *Généalogie du concept de résilience*, École Normale Supérieure de Lyon – Département Sciences Humaines – M1 Histoire de la philosophie (report), September 2018.

728 Carol Ciligan, *In a different voice: Psychological Theory and Women's Development*, Harvard University Press, 1982.

discourse on heritage and its supposed virtues. Indeed, common opinion willingly endows the heritage approach an almost analgesic or thaumaturgical social power: social, psychological, territorial, geopolitical, economic resilience... UNESCO has adopted it, bringing about a change in the very philosophy of heritage distinction: it is no longer just a question of pointing out the prowess of human creativity or celebrating the beauty of nature, but also of taking into account the worst that man has done and protecting damaged ecosystems endangered by man.

There is the underlying idea that like psychoanalysis, heritage can reconcile, heal, neutralise conflict, and compensate for a lack of unity or overcome division, thanks to the restorative magic of remembrance. Everything happens as if the reactivation, recovery, and preservation of the past were a factor in palingenesis and a promise of the future and renewal. The most striking example of this today is the movement for the restitution of cultural property acquired via illegal means during the colonial period. This phenomenon is not new, and is part of the long history of 'trophy archives'. The recovery of items from the past would result in redemption and repair that would allow former colonies to reinvest their identity and achieve reconciliation with themselves and with their former colonisers. This news can be related to news of another event: the tragic death of George Lloyd in Minneapolis on May 25, 2020. This event sparked a wave of indignation that manifested itself on monuments in public spaces that bore witness to the history of the domination of whites over blacks around the world. The 'heroes' of yesterday had to be toppled in favour of 'victims', who for too long had been deprived of a heritage and moral presence in public spaces. According to estimates, more than 100 statues of famous people were damaged or removed from public spaces by local authorities between May and October 2020.

This is indicative of the importance placed by public opinion on heritage (i.e. beyond monuments or memorials), the history of the victims, and their claim to their rightful place in history, with the idea that recourse to memory and heritage can manifest itself in action for the present day. The concept of resilience is generally called upon when there has been an upsetting, disruptive, or even traumatic event, whether during a historical (e.g. conflict, genocide), technological, or natural disaster, or as a result of a more or less gradual process that causes a radical change in the social, economic, or political environment (e.g. decolonisation, deindustrialisation).

I propose to question this received wisdom through a dual perspective. First, how can this oft-cited notion be considered less a concept and more a

'marker' of the evolution of the relationship of contemporary societies with the issue of memory, its purposes, and its points of materialisation? Second, how does the notion of 'resilience' (which arose in the English-speaking world in the early 1970s and was popularised in the early 2000s) serve to help analyse the supposedly redemptive effects of the revival of the heritage aspect of conflict, suffering, absence, and loss? The ultimate question is whether this is a social reality or a period doxa, an 'instituent fiction', or a myth.

One must first determine what the notion of resilience encompasses, as it falls under a number of disciplinary registers and is very polysemic and ductile, due to the fact that it does not (yet) have the stability afforded by veritable scientific status.[729] While little is known of its etymology, we do know that the word has been used in English-speaking cultures, that it arose at the start of the 1970s and became more commonplace in the 2000s. The notion has been referred to most in psychological and psychiatric research, which has served as the main vehicle for the dissemination of the concept.[730]

Here are the main disciplines where it has developed chronologically.

Physics	The ability of materials to absorb kinetic energy after a shock, without breaking (and therefore, without changing state).
War medicine	Post-traumatic stress disorder.
Environment	'But there is another property, termed resilience, that is a measure of the persistence of systems and of their ability to absorb change and disturbance and still maintain the same relationships between populations or state variables'.[731]
Psychoanalysis	A 'dynamic process that involves positive adaptation within the framework of significant adversity'.[732]
Agriculture	In agriculture, the expression 'sustainable and resilient' is used to refer to soil management that reduces the environmental footprint of agricultural activity.

729 Michel Manciaux, « La résilience. Un regard qui fait vivre », *Études*, Vol. Tome 395, no. 10, 2001, p. 321–330.

730 S.S. Luthar, D. Cicchetti, B. Becker, 'The Construct of Resilience: A Critical Evaluation and Guidelines for Future Work', *Child Development*, vol. 71, no. 3, 2000, p. 543–562.

731 Crawford Stanley Holling, 'Resilience and Stability of Ecological Systems', *Annual Review of Ecology and Systematics*, Vol. 4 (1973), pp. 1–23

732 Marie Anaut, *La résilience. Surmonter les traumatismes*, Paris, Armand Colin, 2005–2008.

IT	The ability of a system to function despite malfunctions within its constituent elements.
Sociology	'The ability of a social system (e.g. an organisation, city, or society) to proactively adapt to and recover from disturbances within it that are perceived as extraordinary and unexpected.'[733]
Town planning	'Urban resilience', 'Urban sustainability'.[734]
Geography	'A system with a very well-developed ability to adapt in an unstable world'.
Management	Risk management[735] and 'dynamic capacity for resilience' or 'ability to cope with disruptive events in the macro environment'.[736]
Heritage	Valuing the past as a source of revitalisation (social, territorial, economic) and the reconciliation of identity.

It is difficult to come up with a single formula that can account for this diversity of uses of the notion of resilience. However, one definition can bring together a number of approaches and open up interesting heuristic perspectives: resilience as the 'capacity of a person or a group to develop well, to continue to project into the future despite destabilising events, difficult living conditions, or severe trauma'.[737] This definition, which comes from public health researchers, is taken from a book whose title is a whole program: *La résilience: Résister et se construire.* There are two other notions at play: 'resistance' (i.e. a force that opposes another force) and 'construction' (i.e. a positive action that confers stability and identity). These two concepts are part of a dialectic of overcoming antagonistic forces between the negative and the positive, and between what is experienced and what is built.

733 Louise K. Comfort, Arjen Boin, Chris C. Demchak, *Designing Resilience: Preparing for Extreme Events,* University of Pittsburgh Press, 2010.

734 Marie Toubin and *al.*, « La Résilience urbaine : Un nouveau concept opérationnel vecteur de durabilité urbaine? », *Développement durable* & *territoires*, vol. 3, no. 1, May 2012.

735 André Dauphiné, Damienne Provitolo, « La résilience : Un concept pour la gestion des risques », *Annales de Géographie*, vol. 654, no. 2, 2007, p. 115–125.

736 Gulsun Altintas, « La capacité dynamique de résilience : l'aptitude à faire face aux événements perturbateurs du macro-environnement », *Management & Avenir*, vol. 115, no. 1, 2020, p. 113–133.

737 Michel Manciaux and *al.*, *La résilience : Résister et se construire*, Geneva, Cahiers Médicaux Sociaux, 2001.

The turn of the 1970s and the beginning of the 'era of the victim'

At the heart of the notion is the relationship to violence. Why? It is in the field of psychiatry where the concept has been most cited and disseminated to the general public. It all started in the United States, where the term emerged in studies on children at the very beginning of the 1970s.[738] In France, Doctor Boris Cyrulnik was the main force behind the dissemination of this notion in the media. This is why resilience is almost always associated with emotional abuse. In schematic terms and for common opinion, resilience could be described as a process for overcoming an act of violence suffered. This definition brings in another concept: that of the 'victim', the victim of an act of violence. When asked why this concept was not studied earlier, neuropsychiatrist Boris Cyrulnik gave the following response: 'Because victims have long been neglected.'

At the heart of the resilient configuration is the victim-violence combination that results from a high-intensity event, which can lead to traumatic reactions. This event is generally associated with violence between individuals (such as violence against children[739]). The current importance of 'personal development' in Western societies has led to a proliferation of studies and books on how to 'decondition oneself from one's past'[740] and 'heal from one's traumas and wounds' (Boris Cyrulnik). The resilience process begins with the will to resist this diabolical confinement to neutralise the destabilising impact of violence, and to be able to access a sustainable state. The process of reappropriating/overcoming this painful past then makes it possible to trigger the resilience process. This process will open a virtuous and re-creative phase of consolation, healing, repair, reconciliation, protection, development, and dynamisation.

However, these can of course be long-lasting collective events or processes. One example would be the impact of the Industrial Revolution on nature, the ecological balance, and the climate, what is now commonly referred to as the 'anthropocene'. The book *L'Europe réenauvagée*, which deplores the destructive action of Promethean and predatory man on

738 Emmy E. Werner, Jessie M. Bierman, Fern E. French, *The children of Kauai: A longitudinal study from the prenatal period to age ten.* Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 1977.

739 Michel Manciaux, « Violence subie et résilience : Introduction et historique », *in* Claude de Tychey (ed), *Violence subie et résilience*. ERES, 2015, pp. 9–16.

740 Stéphanie Hahusseau, *Comment ne plus subir. Se déconditionner de son passé*, Paris, O. Jacob, 2018.

plant and animal heritage, begins as follows: 'Our Europe was one of the first continents to suffer as a result of human activity'.[741] According to its authors, to 'reintroduce' extinct animal heritage is to 'repair'. Take, for example (and conversely), the economic, social, and urban suffering of territories that have been the victims of deindustrialisation: how can we avoid the *tabula rasa* of the old productivist world and reinstate industrial heritage as a cultural value in the urban space and the collective representations?[742] Geographers and town planners have worked extensively on urban renewal processes, and have been propagators of the concept of 'resilience', applied in particular to territories and societies affected by deindustrialisation and peri-urbanisation since the 1970s. The problem unfolded around the question of soil pollution in (de)industrialised[743] territories, but also through the issue of the transformation of the building heritage of the industrial era: how can we 'regenerate' an area stricken with escheat in a creative place?[744]

How to marry modernity and memory? How to preserve this history[745] while at the same time fighting against social and spatial imbalances? This has been (and continues to be) the experience of the city of Saint-Étienne (Loire, France)[746], as well as of other European cities (Turin, Newcastle, Hamburg, Dortmund, etc.). The earth has become man's greatest victim, and the relationship between man and nature needs to be rethought. The 'age of resilience' has arrived[747] at the same time as the 'planetary age'[748].

741 Gilbert Cochet, Béatrice Kremer-Cochet, *L'Europe réensauvagée, op.cit.*, p. 33.

742 Robert Belot, Pierre Lamard (dir.), *Image[s] de l'industrie, XIX^e^ et XX^e^ siècles*, Paris, éd. ETAI, 2011.

743 Christelle Morel Journel, Georges Gay, Cécile Ferrieux, 'La résilience territoriale comme principe et comme volonté. Réflexions à partir de la question de la pollution des sols dans des territoires (dés)industrialisés', *VertigO – la revue électronique en sciences de l'environnement* [online], Special Issue 30 | May 2018.

744 Vincent Beal, *Sociologie de Saint-Étienne*, Paris, La Découverte, 2020.

745 Maurice Daumas, *L'Archéologie industrielle en France*, Paris, R. Laffont, 1980.

746 This is a theme that we have been working on with students from our Erasmus mundus DYCLAM+ master's programme and our partners. To this end, we organised a congress of the International Committee for the History of Technology: Robert Belot, Luc Rojas, « Saint-Étienne, lieu de mémoire de l'industrie française », *Industry & Innovation in Saint-Étienne* (France), Booklet of *The 45^th^ ICOHTEC Symposium, July 2018,* Jean Monnet University, p 3–19.

747 Jeremy Rifkin, *The Age of Resilience. Reimagining Existence on Rewilding Earth*, London, Swift Press, 2022.

748 Dipesh Chakrabarty, *The Climate of history in a planetary age*, Chicago, The University of Chicago, 2021.

Collective events that produce violence and a rupture are generally associated with conflicts and wars. How to survive the brutal experience of violence in individual and collective destinies?

The Great European War (1914–1918), the deadliest and most brutal war in human history, was at the origin of the advent of war medicine. In addition to the countless injured and amputees who had to be treated and rehabilitated, some survivors were affected by post-traumatic stress syndrome. Psychology had a new field to explore. Freud was challenged by this question, as demonstrated by his book *Reflections on War and Death*. Several hundred thousand French and Germans had been affected by mental disorders.[749] We had to deal with what we were beginning to call 'war neuroses'.[750] The Vietnam War accelerated reflection on the psychological trauma of war. It was at this time that the concept of 'post-traumatic stress disorder' emerged. It is no coincidence that the concept of 'resilience' has taken hold in the United States.

Recent US studies have attempted to apply the metaphor of resilience to survivors of the Holocaust.[751] The 1970s were also a turning point for historical research, driven by trends in collective and affective memory. Research focused on the question of mass violence. It marked the start of the 'era of the victim'[752] and of the 'empire of trauma'.[753] In France, we see this evolution in the memory and historiography of World War II and of the German occupation: a primitive phase, developed around the glorification of the Resistance (the hero of the anti-Nazi struggle and a symbol of political renewal), overshadowing victims (the deportation of Jews, for example[754]), and civil resistance, gradually gave way to consideration of the harmfulness of the Vichy regime (in the deportation of Jews, in Franco-German collaboration) and of the 'executioners' (collaborators,

749 Louis Crocq, *Les blessés psychiques de la Grande Guerre*, Paris, O. Jacob, 2014.

750 Julien Bogousslavsky, Laurent Tatu, *La folie au front. La grande bataille des névroses de guerre (1914–1918)*, Imago, 2012.

751 Roberta R. Greene *et al*., *Holocaust survivors: Three waves of resilience research. J Evid Based Soc Work*. 2012, 9(5), p.481-497.

752 Iannis Roder, *Sortir de l'ère victimaire. Pour une nouvelle approche de la Shoah et des crimes de guerre*, Paris, O. Jacob, 2019, p. 49.

753 Didier Fassin, Richard Rechtman, *L'Empire du traumatisme. Enquête sur la condition de victime*, Paris, Flammarion, 2011. These authors show how a 'policy of reparation' has developed.

754 Robert Belot, « Le sort des juifs dans les discours et les pratiques du mouvement Combat », *Les Cahiers de la Shoah* no. 8, Paris, éditions Liana Levi, 2005, p. 179–226.

traitors, auxiliaries of the German police).[755] Today, the national memory is centred on the question of the spoliation of the Jews and the enhancement of the Righteous, the women and men who saved Jews. It is no coincidence that in 2020, Chambon-sur-Lignon (Haute-Loire), the land of rescue for refugees and those persecuted by the Nazis, was classified under the new 'European Heritage' label after becoming the only village recognised as 'Righteous' by the Yad Vashem memorial in Jerusalem. At the dawn of the 1980s, the Holocaust has become a central element in the remembrance of World War II and in Western culture[756].

World War I has not escaped this onerous trend: it has been reinterpreted through the prism of 'brutalisation'[757] and of the suffering of French soldiers. After a long memorial phase highlighting heroism and patriotism, historians are today interested in the intimate and daily experience of French soldiers[758] and in the 'European community of suffering' that has brought combatants from all sides together.[759] There is a dialectic and an interaction between memory and academic history, and the claims of the groups concerned.

Scholarly culture is in step with the emergence of two expectations in contemporary societies: compassion and emotion.[760] This compassionate dynamic allows other parts of the memory of suffering of humanity (colonisation, slavery, women, etc.) to re-emerge and to claim their right to become part of world heritage.

As I have already demonstrated[761], the European project, which took shape within the struggles of the Resistance against Nazism during World

755 Robert Belot, « Temps épistémologique, temps social et conscience historique : Les raisons du retard historiographique de l'occupation en France », *Corée-France: Regards croisés sur deux sociétés face à l'occupation étrangère*, dir. Robert Belot, Woo Bong Ha, Jung Sook Bae, Presses de l'UTBM, 2013, pp. 15–56.

756 Raoul Hildberg, *The Politics of Memory: The Journey of a Holocaust Historian*, Chicago, Ivan R. Dee, 2002.

757 George L. Mosse, *Fallen soldiers: Reshaping the memory of the world wars*, New York, Oxford University Press, 1990.

758 Rémy Cazals, André Loez, *14–18. Vivre et mourir dans les tranchées*, Paris, éd. Tallandier, 2012.

759 Frédéric Rousseau, *La guerre censurée. Une histoire des combattants européens de 14–18*, Paris, Seuil, 1999–2003.

760 Lauren Berlant ed., *Compassion: The culture and politics of emotion*, New York/Londres, Routledge, 2004.

761 Robert Belot, *The rebirth of Europe after the war. Hopes, divisions and failure among the French Resistance*, Lausanne, Fondation Jean Monnet pour l'Europe, coll. 'Les Cahiers Rouges', 2022.

War II and would result in the creation of the European Union, was part of this desire to put an end to a cycle of violence that had begun in 1870. It is a manifestation of *geopolitical resilience*: consideration of the causes of conflict (nationalism and racism) to overcome suffering and division in order to bring about peace and reconciliation. In his *Reflections on War and Death*, Freud had indeed analysed this process of disintegration of the European bond caused by the Great War, which was bloodier and more murderous than any war in the past:

> 'It hurls down in blind rage whatever bars its way, as though there were to be no future and no peace after it is over. It tears asunder all community bonds among the struggling peoples and threatens to leave a bitterness which will make impossible any reestablishment of these ties for a long time to come.'[762]

Resilience is precisely an attempt to restore this connection. This restoration is the basis of heritage action, which is a process of dynamic reappropriation of a past event with a view to overcoming it via creative means. In the case of Europe, this dynamic was implemented by the creation of institutions, with people continuing to play a modest role.

What has not yet been noticed is that there is a chronological concomitance between the emergence of the concept (or the notion) of resilience and the renewed interest in heritage. This also reflects the search for another temporality and other values after the cycle of the Glorious Thirties. This was also the time when environmentalism took off. Pierre Nora, the inventor of 'lieux de mémoire'[763], spoke of an explosion: 'We are witnessing a brutal and chaotic inflation of all items of heritage. Whole swathes of new fields have become part of what is considered heritage'.[764] One example is the creation of the Ecomuseum of Creusot in 1974 (industrial heritage). At the end of the 1970s, there was also the research carried out by the historian Maurice Daumas within the framework of the CNAM (National Conservatory of Arts and Crafts) on the birth of 'industrial archaeology' as a field of research[765], and the decision of the then President of the

762 Sigmund Freud, *Reflections on war and death*, English translation by Brill and Kuttner, Moffat, Yard and Company, New York, 1918, p. 6.

763 The following translations are available: 'places of memory', 'sites of memory' or 'realms of memory'.

764 Pierre Nora, *Présent, nation, mémoire*, Paris, Gallimard, 2011, p. 97.

765 Robert Belot, 'The Advent of Europe's Industrial Heritage as a Field of Research: The contribution of Maurice Daumas through the CNAM Survey', *Ethnologies*,

French Republic, Valéry Giscard d'Estaing, in 1977 to turn the Gare d'Orsay into a museum and declare 1980 Heritage Year. The warning signs of the post-industrial world were already plain to see. A whole model of development was to make way for a new modernity. We had to take an interest in what was going to die and what could be saved. At the time, we were witnessing a dilation and a 'metaphorical extension' (P. Nora) of the notion, which had hitherto been reserved for the monumental, the majestic, and the spectacular. According to Pierre Nora, at the source of this phenomenon of hypermnesia was 'the acceleration of history', which would have caused a 'sense of loss' in the face of the unpredictability of the future.[766] Globalisation has reinforced this feeling and has contributed to this need for a renewal of identity, and even community renewal. The dissemination of digital technology in our lives represents a revolution in our relationship to records and memories, but also the birth of a virtual heritage endowed with an infinite capacity for dissemination.

Turning violence, injustice, and loss into heritage to ward off pain

Recently, UNESCO touted 'resilience' as one of its ambitions, with resilience having become an attribute of heritage. When you stand in front of UNESCO's headquarters in Paris, you can read on a sign describing the missions of this UN agency: 'UNESCO World Heritage. A source of resilience, humanity and innovation'[767].

However, the term very seldom appears in UN texts, and when it does it refers primarily to natural heritage. If we refer to the Basic Texts of the 1972 World Heritage Convention (UNESCO, 2019 edition), we find a text dated July 10, 2019 entitled: *Operational Guidelines for the Implementation of the World Heritage Convention* (an intergovernmental committee for the protection of world cultural and natural heritage). Two articles contain references to this concept. Article 15: 'Integrate the protection of this heritage into comprehensive planning programmes and in mechanisms for coordi-

---

Laval Universtiy (Canada), vol. 42, n°1–2, 2020, p. 47–88. https://doi.org/10.7202/1074935ar

766 P. Nora, *Présent, nation, mémoire, op.cit.,* p. 108.

767 UNESCO, in partnership with the Japanese Agency for Cultural Affairs (ACA), the Japanese National Institutes for Cultural Heritage (NICH), ICCROM and ICOMOS, has organized a special session on 'Resilient Cultural Heritage' within the framework of the Third United Nations World Conference Disaster Risk Reduction (WCDRR), which has taken place between 14 and 18 March 2015 at Sendai, Japan.

nation, with particular emphasis on *the resilience of assets' socio-ecological systems*'. Heritage appears as a potential victim, as we intend to 'combat the perils that threaten heritage'. The other article is Article 118 bis, which refers to the assessment of the environmental impact: 'This will ensure the long-term protection of outstanding universal value and *build up the resilience of heritage* to disasters and climate change.' The cruel paradox is that UNESCO has had to deal with another threat to the sites it has listed in order to protect them: anti-heritage terrorism, where heritage as such has become the target to be destroyed by culturicide movements.

Over the past ten years, current events have highlighted the geopolitical importance of heritage and cultural property.[768] Tragic events have made the symbolic power of cultural heritage clear to public opinion: from the protected mausoleums in Timbuktu, to the fire at the Notre-Dame de Paris and the destruction of the Monumental Arch of Palmyra. The international community has finally taken this issue into account. On September 27, 2016, the International Criminal Court issued a powerful signal when it handed down a historic judgment against the Malian jihadist who had admitted having destroyed part of the religious heritage of Timbuktu: crimes against heritage were thus recognised for the first time. While there is a need to repress such conduct, it is also necessary to repair and prevent it. For this reason, a new foundation (Aliph[769]) was created in Abu Dhabi in collaboration with UNESCO on March 20, 2017. The purpose of this foundation is 'the protection of endangered heritage'. However, threats are not always spectacular in dimension. The growth of trafficking in cultural property, particularly following the disorder that reigns in the Middle East, constitutes a major threat as it is a way of depriving peoples of their heritage. It was for this reason that the United Nations Security Council passed a resolution (February 12, 2015) to protect and defend cultural heritage against looting, trafficking, and destruction in all conflict zones.

Europe is fully committed to this policy: the 47 heritage ministers at the Council of Europe have launched an appeal in Namur (April 2015) for closer 'international solidarity'. The European Commission has made plans to strengthen intra-European cooperation and made a commitment (July 2017) to protecting 'World heritage'. The Commission made the decision to change the regulatory environment by proposing a crime specific to

768 Robert Belot, 'Heritage abuse and geopolitical disorder at the dawn of the third millennium', *Ethnologies*, vol. 39, no. 1, 2018, p. 27–49.

769 Aliph: International Alliance for the protection of heritage in conflict areas.

offences involving cultural property (in connection with the fight against the financing of terrorism) and a European regulation making it possible to engage in a global effort against the illicit importation of cultural property into the EU, in conjunction with developing countries.

There is victim heritage to be protected, and there are the victims of history to be protected by making it heritage. The entries on the UNESCO World Heritage List are indicative of an evolution that echoes this trend towards victimisation and offer it new horizons. Majestic and spectacular heritage, which values the capacity of man to surpass himself, gives way to the heritage of desolation that is intended to be both a tribute to the victims and a message in favour of prevention. We can cite a few iconic examples of three types of historical violence that have received UN recognition: the island of Gorée (1978); Auschwitz (1979); and Genbaku Dome in Hiroshima (1996). An analysis of the list of cultural assets that have received the 'European Heritage' label (awarded by the European Union since 2005) reveals that six of these sites are places that symbolise the tragic heritage of Europe. The 2020 selection contains two entries (out of 10) that have a direct relationship with Europe at war (the Łambinowice Commemoration site (Poland) and the Place of Memory at Chambon-sur-Lignon (France) dedicated to the memory of the Righteous (those who helped Jews during the Nazi period), and one entry linked to the benevolence shown to the victims: the Colonies de Bienveillance (Belgium and the Netherlands). There is also the Sighet Memorial (Romania), listed in 2018, the first memorial dedicated (under this classification) to the memory of the victims of Communism. However, the philosophy of this classification aims to highlight the European dimension of cultural property, monuments, cultural sites, places of memory, etc., as witnesses of a shared history and a common culture to bring the European construct to fruition.

Turning the memory of the most tragic and violent events into heritage can be presented as a form of resilience: the recalling of a violent memory (resistance to oblivion) is a way of taking the victims and their suffering into account in a process to overcome this tragic story that ultimately serves two purposes: to repair and to prevent.[770] Thus, resilience does not merely mean 'consolation', withdrawal into an imaginary and nostalgic identity. It is about trying to come to terms with oneself, and with those

770 Robert Belot, « La patrimonialisation *du pire* a-t-elle des vertus véritatives et préventives? Le Dôme d'Hiroshima comme lieu de *dé-mémoire* », *Ethnologies*, vol. 37, no. 2, 2017, p. 3–28.

who have committed violence or injustice. It is about trying to assume a loss (the loss of a person, a landscape, a tradition, an activity, etc.) in exchange for something else (well-being, etc.).[771] Resilience is at the heart of the difference between 'the unconsoled' (the person who admits loss or intolerable deprivation, but wants to turn their suffering into a claim or action) and 'the inconsolable' (the person who is powerless to bring about this change and recover from a loss or trauma).[772] Freud was clear that consolation should not be a refuge from distress in religion, withdrawal, or metaphysics, which would lead to an illusory cure.

The process of turning something into heritage is intrinsically connected to the idea that memorial distinction (a memory that assumes material form and is maintained and valued in the long-term) must serve to preserve a memory so that the future does not forget the past. This operation to ensure the survival of memory (the second attribute of turning something into heritage) is said to have a prophylactic virtue: memory must serve to forge a better future, since it would be able to protect and transform. Hence the (questionable) concept of the 'duty of memory'.

A definition of resilience must take account of the dialectic of resistance and rebound. The word 'resilience' is said to derive from the Latin verb *salire*[773] (to jump, with the prefix 're' indicating a backward movement[774]), while the word 'resistance' is said to come from the verb *stare* (to remain still, to stand, to 'stand firm'). When applied to heritage this means to remember, to move forward, so that the worst 'does not happen again'. Thus, heritage opens the door to the magnificent possibility of being able to heal from the worst and resist the fatality of history. The European Union could be seen as the most successful demonstration of the validity of this axiom. However, the memory of the Armenian genocide or the Holocaust, among other examples, has not prevented other contemporary genocides, such as that in Rwanda. But we can agree that at the heart of the definition of heritage there is the idea of movement, of dynamics. This is at odds with a very widespread view that heritage is synonymous with backward-looking conservative and onanistic contemplation.

771 Michel Juffé, « La résilience : de quoi, à quoi et pour quoi? », *Annales des Mines – Responsabilité et environnement*, 2013/4 (no. 72), p. 7–11.

772 Mickaël Foessel, *Le Temps de la consolation*, Paris, Seuil, 2015.

773 "L'elasticità di *resilienza", A cura di Simona Cresti, Redazione Consulenza Linguistica*, Accademia della Crusca. https://accademiadellacrusca.it/it/consulenza/lelasticit%C3%A0-di-resilienza/928

774 Serge Tisseron, *La résilience,* Paris, Presses Universitaires de France, 2009, p. 7.

Ruins as heritage-relics and involuntary monument

The asymmetrical wars that have followed the Cold War have renewed the arsenal of culturicide and refuelled hatred for heritage: the explosion of the Bamiyan Buddhas by the Taliban in Afghanistan in 2001; the destruction of several mausoleums and the burning of manuscripts in Timbuktu (June-July 2012); the demolition and desecration of the mausoleum of Sage al-Shaab al-Dahmani in Tripoli, Libya (August 2012); the ransacking of the pre-Islamic heritage of the Mosul museum and burnings (February 2015); the attack on the Bardo Museum (March 18, 2015) in Tunisia; and the destruction of the Monumental Arch of Palmyra (October 5, 2015). This list is not exhaustive. The hatred of heritage has always existed. To destroy the heritage of another people is to destroy their history; it is the desire to annihilate it. On February 12, 2015, the United Nations Security Council adopted a resolution to protect and defend cultural heritage against looting, trafficking, and destruction in all conflict zones.

Europe experienced this phenomenon in the late 20th century, during the implosion of Yugoslavia.[775] Bosnian Serbs were not only responsible for ethnic cleansing: they committed 'monumental cleansing' through the physical elimination of Muslim symbols: during the course of the war, 614 Muslim places of worship were destroyed. In 1993, the 16th-century mosques in Banja Luka, which had been World Heritage listed, were destroyed. In Sarajevo, the Library was devastated. Traces of the multi-ethnic nature of the former Yugoslavia had to be erased. The paths to resilience have been rebuilt. In 2016, several thousand people gathered in Banja Luka, the capital of the Serbian Republic of Bosnia, one Saturday to attend the reopening of the Ferhat-Pasha mosque, a historic building destroyed during the war. Similarly, the National Library of Bosnia, which had also been destroyed, was rebuilt in its pseudo-Moorish style and inaugurated in 2014. Of the 12 million euros spent, 9 million came from the European Union. The ruined landscape has become an instrument of propaganda, a hypermediatised 'place of discourse'.[776]

775 François Chaslin, *Une haine monumentale: Essai sur la destruction des villes en ex-Yougoslavie*, Paris, Descartes & Cie, 1997; Vincent Veschambre, *Traces et mémoires urbaines. Enjeux sociaux de la patrimonialisation et de la démolition*, Rennes, Presses Universitaires de Rennes, 2008.

776 Bénédicte Tratnjek, « Le paysage-spectacle dans la guerre : L'urbicide, une mise en scène de la haine dans la ville », *Secondes Journées Doctorales en Paysage*, Dec 2009, Blois, France. ⟨halshs-00650729⟩

There is some good news: Courtesy of new image-processing technologies, destruction can no longer be what it used to be. Courtesy of the digital revolution, resurrection is now possible. We have seen this with the reconstruction of the Monumental Arch of Palmyra: using a 3D printer, life-size copies were made and installed in Trafalgar Square in London and in Times Square in New York in April 2016. A French company (ICONEM), a partner of parent company DYCLAM+, was created for this purpose. The United Nations, in conjunction with CERN[777], has designed a technology-intensive program (UNOSAT). This program can provide imagery analysis and satellite solutions to organisations working in the fields of humanitarian activity, security, and endangered heritage.[778]

A choice can also be made not to rebuild or reconstitute in order to let a ruin speak, to protect the effect of desolation and amazement that only a ruin can provide. The emotional virtues of ruins were highlighted by the writer René-François de Chateaubriand (1768–1848): 'All men have a secret attraction to ruins. This feeling is a function of the fragility of our nature, of a secret consistency between these monuments that have been destroyed and the fleeting nature of our existence.'[779] A ruin then becomes heritage through the choice to preserve it as a ruin. In addition to monuments that have been designed as such, one must also take into account those that have become monuments in spite of themselves, so to speak, such as industrial landscapes or equipment that have lost their value for use but could increase in cultural and memorial value through the process of heritage and social appropriation. There are the monuments that society values, glorifies, and even exploits, and there are those that it neglects, despises, and abandons. The recent *Urbex* phenomenon reflects a form of resistance to a certain inevitability of the oblivion and abandonment that may await memorials because of their status as testimony to a history that has been denied, despite the benevolent attention and resources dedicated to them.[780] Urban explorers, who often act illegally, are also against the current opinion

777 CERN: the European Organization for Nuclear Research.

778 It can produce highly accurate geographical maps of areas of the world affected or threatened by natural disasters or conflict. See: 'Empowering pacific resilience: UNOSAT's technological and capacity building initiatives', 28 May 2024, Geneva, Switzerland. https://www.unitar.org/about/news-stories/news/empowering-pacific-resilience-unosats-technological-and-capacity-building-initiatives

779 See Alain Schnapp, *Une histoire universelle des ruines. Des origines aux Lumières*, Paris, Seuil, 2020.

780 Nicolas Offenstadt, *Urbex. Le phénomène de l'exploration urbaine décryptée*, Paris, Albin Michel, 2022.

that demonises the factory as a symbol of the anthropocene: they have rediscovered the 'poetry' of industry celebrated by Achille Kaufmann in the *Revue de Paris* in 1853.

Yet paradoxically, these 'involuntary' memorials are the memorials to which society has the closest attachment. In her remarkable book – *L'Allégorie du patrimoine* – Françoise Choay stated that 'the symbolic monument erected *ex nihilo* for the purpose of remembrance is practically no longer current in our developed societies', and that the authentic monuments, vectors of emotion, were those that 'do not say their name' and 'are concealed in unusual minimal and non-metaphorical forms' that 'recall a past whose weight, and, more often, horror, mean that they cannot be entrusted to historical memory alone'. A ruin is an open wound, not closed, not reintegrated into a process of normalisation or neutralisation. This is learning through affect:

> 'The affective nature of the intended purpose is essential: the aim is not to make people observe or to deliver neutral information, but to use emotion to stir a living memory. (….) The specificity of the monument is therefore precisely due to its effect on memory. Monuments do not just work the memory and mobilise it through affectivity, in order to recall the past by giving it a sensitive presence.'[781]

This is the case of the Genbaku Dome, in Hiroshima, a ruin listed as a World Heritage Site in 1996 that symbolises one of the most tragic events of the 20th century. There are other examples that predate the Dome. One is the extermination camps invented by the Nazis, which are 'better than abstract symbols or realistic images, better than photographs, because an integral part of the jointly-remembered drama is the concentration camps themselves, with their barracks and their gas chambers, which have become monuments.'[782] For France, we could cite the town of Oradour-sur-Glane, a victim of the atrocities of the Nazi occupiers, or the church of old Saint-Etienne in Caen (Normandy).

The concern for the preservation of testimony of devastation and violence was systematised during World War I. To this end, the Photographic Section of the Armies was created in 1915. One photographer, Paul Castelnau (1880–1944), specialised in photographing the destruction of the Great War. Postcards played a role in the 'war of images', and featured topograph-

781 Françoise Choay, *L'Allégorie du patrimoine*, Paris, Seuil, 1992–1999, p. 14–15.
782 *Ibid.,* p. 20.

ic views of ruins. On both sides of the Western Front, the French and the Germans used these views of destruction as proof of the barbarism of the other, thus contributing to the mobilisation of the populations at war. The aim was to demonstrate the impact (human, heritage, environmental, landscape) of the war. In some cases, reconstruction proved impossible. The landscape and vegetation continued to bear the lasting scars of the war: the areas that became battlefields simply could not be returned to their original function as agricultural land (vineyards, meadows, orchards, etc.). The law of April 17, 1919 transferred ownership of these areas to the State and the Office National des Forêts was given the task of creating and developing the Verdun national forest inside red zones, on land that had been neither completely demined nor decontaminated.

In other cases, non-reconstruction is the product of a testimonial and pedagogical decision: these sites have been left in a state of ruin. In 1915, Sermaize-les-Bains (Marne) asked for the classification of its church, which had been burnt down during the Battle of the Marne between September 6 and 12, 1914, 'provided that the monument remain in ruins... so as to perpetuate the crime committed on our unfortunate country. The interior of the church would be transformed into an ossuary, and the transept into a museum of remembrance'.[783] As early as 1915, the Ministry of Public Instruction launched a process of reflection for the preservation of the memory of these events and their heroes: the creation of the *Commission des souvenirs et vestiges de guerre* (Commission for Memories and Traces of War). Its mission was to take regulatory account of places and monuments selected for conservation.

The ruin establishes 'relic' heritage. The underlying idea is to build resilience through visual and physical confrontation with the concrete consequences of violence of destruction.

The analgesic virtues of heritage action

Heritage is generally seen as a factor in resilience because of its potential for reconciliation, mending, and 'resynchronisation'. After a disruptive event, it restores ties to produce more harmony, wards off violence, eases suffering, and provides relief from loss. Which ties? The ties between past and

783 *Première Guerre mondiale et monuments historiques*, Direction générale du Patrimoine, Ministère de la Culture (France), novembre 2014, p. 7.

present, between individuals, between communities, and between nations. History (in the sense of the discipline) is often presented as the cardinal operator of this reconciling metamorphosis: it makes it possible to reconcile with the past and time, with oneself, and with others.

Heritage action, which plays a role in the historical process as a vector and mediator, depends of course on the event at the origin of the rupture and the desire for heritage and resilience. While the events that cause shock, fear, or suffering can be very diverse, a distinction can be made between two broad categories of disruptive event: historical events (caused by man) and natural events (beyond the control of man). Each type of event can be short-term or long-term. A 'disruptive' (or brutal) event takes place in a short time and in a limited space, and with a certain suddenness: it can be a revolt, a war (whether civil or foreign), a health crisis (Covid 19), a violent confrontation between communities, or a disaster (climate, health, or technological). An 'evolutionary' (or lasting) event can be classified as 'low intensity' as it unfolds over an average time frame (colonisation, apartheid, deindustrialisation, modernity, globalisation) or over a long time (climate change, the male/female ratio). Here, we will confine ourselves to events of a historical nature.

Patrimonialisation and reconciliation require a specific protocol that must ensure knowledge and recognition of the conflict. The process of resilience requires an awareness among the two parties in conflict, and therefore a sharing of views. This process differs from the judicial option, which will lead to one party being declared guilty and a sentence being handed down. Patrimonialisation and reconciliation must be part of a broader awareness of (and search for) 'truth' according to methodological precautions and protocols of the history of historians.

The wholesale massacres of the 20th century allowed the development of analytical models on memory and the history of the worst events.[784]

While the Nuremberg trial had a proven legal dimension, at the same time (and even, above all) it served the interests of a heritage issue: witnesses had to be heard and the facts recorded to build up a knowledge of Nazism and its misdeeds, to preserve it in the collective memory in the future. The numerous volumes of the trial constitute a historical-memorial paper monument of sorts that testifies to the tragedy suffered by European

784 Jacques Semelin, *Purifier et détruire : Usages politiques des massacres et génocides*, Paris, Seuil, 2005.

populations, and are presented as a warning. This trial brought Europeans together around the rejection of liberticidal and hegemonic ideologies, and enabled them to imagine a new horizon based on the superiority and desirability of 'Western' democracy.[785] Many lament the fact that the fall of the Soviet empire did not result in a 'Nuremberg of Communism', i.e. a symbolically powerful moment that opened the way to a collective catharsis from knowledge of the historical phenomenon and recognition of the suffering experienced.[786]

Other experiences closer to us have taken place, which have shown the benefits of heritage as a source of resilience and a source upon which to draw for the restoration of social and national ties. The clear-eyed reappropriation of the past (whether recent or distant) opens the door to reconciliation/repair of oneself, with oneself, and of oneself with others. This is the case of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission in South Africa (1996–1998) that was established by the Promotion of National Unity and Reconciliation Act of July 19, 1995, shortly after Nelson Mandela came to power. The main mission was to identify human rights violations since 1960 to build up a heritage of discrimination. This was also the case with the *National Unity and Reconciliation Commission* established in Rwanda (1999) after the horrible genocide of Tutsis (1994), the last wholesale massacre of the 20th century.[787]

A *National Commission for the Fight against Genocide* has been entrusted with compiling the memory of the genocide. Many historians have been part of this approach, which starts a process of heritagisation. Their presence bears witness to the desire to put this event into perspective, in order to make it part of a heritage dynamic. A memorial has been built. It is through this dynamic that the work of memory and mourning can develop

785 Kim Christian Priemel, *The Betrayal: The Nuremberg Trials and German Divergence*, Oxford University Press, 2016.

786 On 25 January 2006, the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe adopted a resolution on the 'need for international condemnation of the crimes of totalitarian communist regimes'. https://assembly.coe.int/nw/xml/XRef/Xref-XML2HTML-FR.asp?fileid=17403&lang=FR

787 The official website states that: 'The NUR was created in March 1999 by a parliamentary law to promote Unity and Reconciliation among Rwandans in the aftermath of the devastating 1994 genocide against Tutsis to mark a major milestone in changing, fundamentally, effects of bad governance based on discrimination and exclusion. NURC has been a pivotal institution in the process of unity and reconciliation policy implementation, social trust and social cohesion towards the main goal achievement of building a united country.'

and avoid the rut of oblivion, revenge, 'emotional contagion',[788] and denial. This memory policy, which mobilises civil society, serves an ambition of rebuilding institutions, national reconciliation, and prevention through the promotion of fundamental human rights, the rehabilitation of survivors, and, of course, the 'eradication of divisionist and genocidal ideology'.[789] The case of Rwanda illustrates the validity of what I might call *heritage squaring*: memorialisation-reparation-reconciliation-prevention.

Quite similar methods were used following the attacks of November 13, 2015. A team of scientists and historians immediately launched a campaign to record testimonies (victims and relatives of victims, direct and indirect witnesses) and interdisciplinary studies to turn this tragic event into heritage, in order to get through the trauma.[790] On the first National Day of Tribute to the Victims of Terrorism on March 11, 2020, in which President Macron participated, the historian Denis Peschanski, one of the initiators of the project, declared that the aim of the studies carried out was to understand the mechanisms of resilience. 'Resilience must make it possible to put the past back in its place, i.e. in the past'.[791] One way to accomplish this delicate transmutation is through commemoration. Drawing a comparison with how Americans have turned September 11, 2001 into part of their heritage, he observed that 'the United States has built its collective resilience around the figure of the hero', while France has built its collective resilience around the figure of the victim.

Thus, it could be said that turning something into heritage-resilience is put in the presence of the past, but of the past as a past of which we have been made aware and is assumed. It is the dominated past, not the past, that dominates the subject through nostalgia, uncontrolled intrusion, avoidance, fear, and neurosis. This transmutation requires a narration (testimony, monument, book, museum, exhibition, etc.). 'All sources of sorrow

788 Caroline Dingeon, « Répétition, remémoration et commémoration au Rwanda », *in* Marie-Odile Godard and Philippe Spoljar, *Le Génocide des Tutsis au Rwanda: Études cliniques*, Sarrebruck, Éditions Universitaires Européennes, 2011, p. 31.

789 Célestin Kanimba Misago, « Commission nationale de lutte contre le génocide. Contexte et perspectives », *Revue d'histoire de la Shoah*, vol. 190, no. 1, 2009, p. 437–450.

790 Denis Peschanski, Francis Eustache, « 13-Novembre », un programme de recherche inédit sur les mémoires traumatiques », *Revue de neuropsychologie*, vol. 8, no. 3, 2016, p. 155–157.

791 *Télérama*, March 11, 2020.

are bearable if you make a story out of them', which is not always the case for some (e.g. Primo Levi).[792]

By putting the event suffered at a distance, the story objectivises the act of heritage and opens the way to the completion of the mourning process favoured by the reappropriation of the past and the promise of an entry in the future and of well-being. The 'narration framework'[793] can take a number of forms, in particular testimonials, museums (real or virtual), designation (European Heritage), special status (UNESCO, the 'Righteous'), memorials, monuments (whether real or virtual, such as the monument to the Parisians who died in 1914–18), and street names.

How to escape alibi and placebo heritage?

We believe that patrimonialisation (i.e. bringing the past into the present as the past for the future) can be a factor in developing resilience (revival and reconciliation) after a painful event.

Of course, it all depends on the event suffered and the type of suffering or fear it has generated, and the type of claim it can trigger.

Type of event	
An international conflict	e.g. Hiroshima, Auschwitz
A civil war	e.g. The former Yugoslavia
A political system	e.g. Communism
An economic system	e.g. Industrialisation / deindustrialisation
A discriminatory policy	e.g. Apartheid, colonisation
A technological disaster	e.g. Chernobyl – Fukushima
A health disaster	e.g. Ebola, AIDS, Covid-19
A natural disaster	e.g. Tsunami – climate change

In order to be effective at fostering resilience, a heritage distinction must meet certain conditions. There are five such conditions:

– The event must put into perspective through a contextualising and problematising 'narrative framework' (not just a collection of artefacts or testimonies)

792 Boris Cyrulnik, *Un merveilleux malheur*, Paris, Odile Jacob, 1999.
793 Lucien Crocq, *Les traumatismes psychologiques de guerre,* Paris, O. Jacob, 1999, p. 10.

– It must respect history and its complexity (academic history)
– It must adopt a rational and non-emotional approach (the act of memory must be, as Marc Bloch wrote, 'with reference to reason'[794])
– Accessibility ensured by an appropriate didactic strategy involving consideration of the social group concerned, by involving it in the process
– The political will to make decisions

The usual pitfall is alibi heritage, the heritage of 'good conscience' that only provides 'llusory cures' and placebo effects. Take the example of the patrimonialisation of pastor Martin Luther King and his fight against racism. Admittedly, he had long been memorialised in his neighbourhood in his hometown of Atlanta. However, a further step in its incorporation into the collective memory was taken when, despite opposition from President Reagan, January 15 (his birthday) was declared a federal holiday (Martin Luther King Day) on November 2, 1983. The ultimate stage of heritage recognition was the erection of a memorial in his memory in the consecrated space that is the National Mall in Washington DC in 2011.[795] Luther King is the first African-American to receive such a tribute from the Nation. But has this gesture helped mitigate 'real' discrimination against black people in the United States?[796] The death of George Lloyd in Minneapolis on May 25, 2020 and the turmoil it caused underline the extent to which African-Americans still feel insufficiently part of the national community. This is borne out by the fact that in the state of Mississippi, for example, King Day is associated with the birthday of Robert E. Lee, a general symbol of the Confederate cause, slaveowner, and white supremacist. His statue was nearly torn down in Charlottesville in 2017, sparking protests and counter-protests that resulted in the death of a young woman. A number of statues were toppled and vandalised at this time, in the United States but also across the Western world.

794 Marc Bloch, « Souvenirs de guerre 1914–1915 », *Cahiers des Annales*, no. 26, 1969, p.9, cited by Annette Becker, *Maurice Halbwachs, un intellectuel en guerres mondiales, 1914–1945*, Agnès Viénot éditeurs, 2003, p. 159.

795 Samuel Rufat, Françoise Bahoken, Sylvestre Duroudier, Olivier Milhaud, Christian Montès et Pascale Nédélec, « Des paroles et des pierres, Martin Luther King de Washington DC au global », *Mappemonde* [En ligne], 132 | 2021.

796 D.H. Alderman, J. Invood, 'Street naming and the politics of belonging: spatial injustices in the toponymic commemoration of Martin Luther King Jr', *Social & Cultural Geography*, 2013, vol. 14, nº 2, p. 211–233.

We can see that heritagisation will not always fulfil the mission of pacification attributed to it if there is no dynamic of consensus, and if politics does not take up the struggle. According to Michael Lapsley, the Truth and Reconciliation Commission established when Mandela came to power did not keep all of its promises: 'In South Africa, the error was to believe that the Commission was an end in itself, when in reality it was just the beginning'.[797] One example of this is the Mostar bridge in Bosnia-Herzegovina, which was destroyed in 1993 by the Croats to blockade the Bosnians. Despite its reconstruction (2004) and its UNESCO designation (on the UNESCO website it says 'Creating reconciliation: Mostar Bridge'), this bridge has not restored the link between the two parts of the city and the communities (Catholic and Muslim) separated by the river. On May 2024, the United Nations established an International Day to Commemorate the Srebrenica Genocide (July 1995) to encourage 'reconciliation, now and for the future'.[798] This is an example of the belief in the conjuring effect of patrimonialisation. The commemoration of the past would serve a useful purpose: it would guarantee that such a tragic event (the genocide, but also, it should be added, the failure of the UN to intervene against the Serbs) would not be repeated. Nothing could be more dubious. Instead of reconciliation, this UN resolution has created dissension. Serbian President Aleksandar Vucic came to New York to fight against this 'highly politicised' initiative, which he said would 'open old wounds and cause political havoc'.[799]

Patrimonialisation can unite as well as divide, and perpetuate conflicting memories. Patrimonialisation can even be a point that results in the materialisation of conflicts, as is still the case in Hebron, in Palestine. Memory can heal, but it can also divide and bruise. Heritage itself is no longer sanctuary: it is sometimes contested, mutilated, or destroyed. This is because the history it claims to embody and eternalise is itself subject to confrontation, to revision, and to conflicts in interpretation as a result of new sensitivities. To illustrate our point, let us briefly analyse two contemporary examples.

797 Michael Lapsley, *Guérir du passé. Du combat pour la liberté au travail pour la paix*, éditions de l'Atelier, 2015.

798 The resolution, prepared by Germany and Rwanda, two countries marked by other 20th century genocides, received 84 votes in favour, 19 against and 68 abstentions. https://press.un.org/en/2024/ga12601.doc.htm

799 https://www.srbija.gov.rs/vest/en/223954/serbia-in-un-defends-world-principles-of-international-law.php; https://www.rferl.org/a/un-srebrenica-resolution-bosnia-genocide/32960943.html

Both are part of a medium-term event that is suddenly and unexpectedly resurfacing today: cultural decolonisation and demolition. The first relates to what is essentially a moral and political claim (even if it involves an object); the second concerns the way of re-examining the memorial narrative that occupies the public space in Western cities.

The restitution of cultural property as reparation

In recent years, heritage has become a geopolitical issue: a source of conflict (between communities, countries, and religions); the target of terrorist violence; an instrument for international cultural rebalancing; and a tool for identity reappropriation and historical reparations. The historian Pierre Nora foresaw the emergence of this kind of 'circularity' between heritage, memory, and identity that translates into an assertive ambition: 'We have gone from an inherited heritage to a claimed and, if necessary, fabricated heritage'.[800] This intuition is illustrated by the hyper-publicised and globalised example of the restitution of cultural property acquired via dubious means during the colonial period.

This phenomenon is not new, and is part of the long history of 'trophy archives' to which the name of Napoleon I is attached[801], but also, less well known, the French Revolution[802]. All countries have to a greater or lesser extent been a victim of or perpetrator in this type of spoliation and deprivation. Closer to home, we can point out the current diplomatic dispute between France and Russia relating to the theft of French archives by Nazi occupiers in 1940, then by the USSR in 1945. These archives constitute historical and memorial capital that has been stolen from France and whose return it had demanded, but are also the testimony of a tragic event (the defeat of 1940, the occupation, the draconian regime of Vichy), mingled with

800 P. Nora, *Présent, nation, mémoire*, *op.cit.*, p. 112.

801 Bénédicte Savoy, *Le Patrimoine annexé. Les biens culturels saisis par la France en Allemagne autour de 1800*, Paris, Éditions de la Maison des Sciences de l'Homme, 2003, 2 volumes, préface de Pierre Rosenberg.

802 Fabienne Henryot, « Depuis les destructions jusqu'à l'ébauche d'une théorie patrimoniale. Les bibliothèques des départements belges pendant les guerres de la Révolution (1792–1795), *Ethnologies*, vol. 39, 1, 2017, p. 63–83.

pain and shame, which 'after years of secrecy, repression, and imperfect mourning',[803] has entered the historisation and patrimonialisation phase.

Concerning the current movement to demand the restitution of ill-gotten cultural property, this property consists of items (objects of art, objects of worship, human bodies, etc.) that have been taken (using very diverse methods that are not always considered 'looting') in the past by Europe from peoples under its domination. We have noted a major change compared to *Les statues meurent aussi*, the famous short film made by Alain Resnais and Chris Marker in 1953, at the beginning of the period of decolonisation. The aim of these filmmakers was to denounce the recovery of 'Negro art' by white colonisers: We had been commissioned to make a film on Negro art', explained Resnais. 'Chris Marker and I started with the following question: Why is Negro art in the Musée de l'Homme, but Greek and Egyptian art in the Louvre?'[804] This question is now outdated: We are not calling for the recognition of non-European art by European museums, but for this art to be removed and returned to the peoples who created it. What is at stake goes beyond the issue of physical restitution: the symbolic and restorative dimension prevails. Restitution is seen as a means of compensating for loss (material loss and loss in terms of identity), but also (and, above all) of coming to terms with the past in order to envisage a new future between former colonised peoples and former colonisers. Here, heritage action would perform its mission of recognition-resilience in full.

We are in the presence of a *global desire for heritage* that has gone hand-in-hand with the growth of tourism, the globalisation of behaviours, and claims to identity. Heritage can divide, but it can also be a symbolic element of rapprochement, reconciliation, and even moral reparation. In 2010, the French government returned 297 manuscripts seized in Korea by the French fleet in 1866 and Maori heads claimed by New Zealand. This resulted in protests from culture and heritage actors, who brandished the weapon of inalienability and expressed fears for the preservation of the entirety of the collections. The main threat was the proliferation of 'political' claims and restitutions. The restitution of heritage that has been 'looted' is an old demand fraught with moral, legal, historical, and diplomatic issues,

803 Sophie Cœuré, *La mémoire spoliée. Les archives des Français, butin de guerre nazi puis soviétique*, Paris, Petite bibliothèque Payot, 2007–2013, p. 259.

804 René Vautier, Nicole Le Garrec, « *Les Statues meurent aussi* et les ciseaux d'Anastasie », *Téléciné*, vol. 175, no. 560, 1972, p. 33. Cited by: M. De Groof, « *Les Statues meurent aussi* (Chris Marker and Alain Resnais, 1953) – mais leur mort n'est pas le dernier mot », *Décadrages*, 40–42 | 2019, 72–93.

as borne out by cases (still ongoing) of theft of Jewish property by the Nazis.

However, the problem is growing today and poses a challenge to the international community, in particular Europe, which has drawn heavily on the heritage of colonised countries. In other words, apart from the heritage issue in the strict sense of the term, the restitution of works of art is fraught by the more complex and sensitive issue of repairing a past based on a balance of power. This is what Victor Hugo stated a long time ago when he challenged Europeans on the case of China, when, in 1860, the English and the French invaded the summer residence of the Emperor Xianfeng:

> 'One day, two bandits entered the Summer Palace. One looted it, the other set it on fire. (...) We Europeans are the civilised people, and for us the Chinese are the barbarians. This is what civilisation has done to barbarism. In the face of history, one of the two bandits will be called France, the other England. (...) It is my hope that a day will come when France, delivered and cleansed, will return this treasure to a dispossessed China.'[805]

Restitution therefore often bears some similarity to *reparation*, or even compensation if there has been spoliation. It was on this basis that in the 1990s, France launched a vast operation of historical and memorial recovery that focused on the question of Jewish property looted during the Nazi occupation from 1940 to 1944. This dynamic was in line with a favourable editorial context: in 1995, two high-profile books shed new light on this issue[806] and encouraged movement. In 1997, the French government took the matter in hand and asked Jean Matteoli, a former member of the Resistance and the then President of the Economic and Social Council, to create a team to 'study the mode of spoliation of Jewish property that had been seized by both the occupier and the Vichy authorities between 1940 and 1944, to assess the extent of these seizures, and to locate this property'. In 1999, a commission was set up to compensate victims of spoliations the result of anti-Semitic legislation in force during the Occupation. Despite the

805 Victor Hugo, Letter to capitaine Butler, Hauteville House, 25 november 1861, *in Actes et Paroles. II. Pendant l'exil. 1852–1870*, Paris, Albin Michel, 1938, p. 162.

806 Lynn H. Nicholas, *The rape of Europa: the fate of Europe 's treasures in the Third Reich and the Second World War*, New York, Knopf, 1994; Hector Feliciano, *Le Musée disparu. Enquête sur le pillage des œuvres d'art en France par les nazis,* Paris, Austral, 1995.

in-depth historical studies that have characterised this process of reclaiming a painful history long denied, the government is showing signs of a certain pro-active approach. In June 2017, for example, it published a *vade mecum* entitled *Le traitement des biens culturels spoliés (The treatment of looted cultural property)*.[807] In 2018, the French Minister of Culture set up a new mission for the restitution of spoliated Jewish property. An important report was published in the aftermath of this mission under the direction of David Zivie (an official at the Ministry of Culture): *Biens culturels spoliés pendant la Seconde Guerre mondiale: Une ambition pour rechercher, retrouver, restituer et expliquer* (Cultural property looted during the Second World War: An ambition to search, recover, return and explain).[808]

Thus, cultural heritage has become a historical, moral, legal, and material issue. But it also has a geopolitical dimension, sometimes giving rise to new claims and even new disputes, to which an appropriate response must be found. In his speech delivered at the University of Ouagadougou in Burkina Faso on Tuesday, November 28, 2017, the President of the French Republic revived this idea of culture as a 'remedy'. After stigmatising 'the crimes of European colonisation', the president committed himself to the 'restitution of African heritage', given that 'there is no valid, lasting, and unconditional justification' for the fact that for the most part African heritage is held in 'private collections and European museums'. We must be prepared for this prospect. The process is under way, with the restitution of 26 works taken from Benin by the Musée du Quai Branly. While the first line of reactions and claims is underpinned by the apparent simplicity of ethics and politics, a barrage of questions arises when one ventures beyond the discourse and postures.

The emergence of this claim sometimes suggests that the phenomenon is recent. One question, which is important but is as little addressed as it is known, is: what is the history of the protest movement among colonised peoples? Is this movement confined to Africa? Should heritage be returned? Permanently or temporarily? What can/must be returned? Do we know the history of objects, the processes by which they were extracted from their place of origin, and how they were acquired? How should heritage items be returned and to whom, in the knowledge that the tribal system is not nec-

807 https://www.conseildesventes.fr/flipbooks/2017/vademecum-biens-spolies/index.html#p=16

808 https://www.lootedart.com/web_images/pdf2019/Rapport biens spoliés D. Zivie – version définitive – juillet 2018.pdf

essarily aligned with the state-national structure of the claiming countries, which moreover has been inherited from the culture of former colonies? Can we envisage a new type of cultural and museum cooperation between Europe and former colonies that does not necessarily involve physical restitution? Can the use of digital technology enable virtual restitution through, for example, digital museums? What are the legal, diplomatic, and technical conditions of this movement for restitution? How can the cultural actors of the countries to which the works will be returned be trained to preserve the integrity of said works? Is there not a risk of de-universalisation[809] of cultural goods and the nationalisation of heritage for identity purposes?

The failure to adopt a truly historical approach in these re-patrimonialisation processes can lead to forms of guilt and moral reflection that aid the search for 'truth' and maintain memorial conflict. We have demonstrated this in the case of Hiroshima and for the return of cultural property with 'Champollion syndrome'.[810]

Demolition as 'deconditioning' of the public memorial space

The demolition of statues and 'vandalism', a form of violent rewriting of history, is a recurring phenomenon in human history: it has accompanied wars, conflicts, and political and religious change. France has experienced such destruction of its heritage on a number of occasions, such as during the German occupation (1940–1945), when the Vichy regime or the Nazi occupier purged its statue heritage by destroying or melting down (when bronze) statues that were deemed politically harmful; thus disappeared statues of Garibaldi, Admiral Bruat, and Gambetta, the monument to the aeronauts of the siege of Paris and to the heroes of the post, telegraphs, railways, and many others. Moreover, it was to fight this political violence that France, at the time of the French Revolution and thanks to the action of Abbé Grégoire, invented the idea of the legal protection of heritage. What from an old order that the people reject should be removed? What should be retained? Under what conditions? The issue has arisen on a large scale in post-colonial societies and in post-communist Europe. The

809 Chantal Delsol, *Le crépuscule de l'Universel. L'Occident postmoderne et ses adversaires, un conflit mondial des paradigmes,* Paris, Les éditions du Cerf, 2020; Amine Boukerche, *L'universalisme contesté*, Rennes, éditions Apogée, 2024.

810 See Note 663.

last gasp of this 'de-communisation' and 'de-canonisation'[811] movement was the decision of the Kyiv mayor's office on April 26, 2022 to demolish a Soviet-era historical monument celebrating the friendship between Ukraine and Russia, after the invasion of Ukraine launched by Moscow in February 2022. This 8-metre bronze statue ensemble, which was erected in 1982, featured a Russian worker and a Ukrainian worker holding a Soviet symbol bearing the inscription *Friendship between peoples*. Some 60 monuments, bas-reliefs, and signs associated with the USSR and Russia are being dismantled, while more than 460 streets have been renamed.

This destruction of heritage was particularly pronounced during the second decade of the 21st century, with the destructive actions of Daesh in the Middle East. It disproved the Austrian writer Robert Musil, who noted that no one was interested in public statues:

> 'Among other peculiarities that [they] can boast about, the most noteworthy is the fact that paradoxically, they are not noticed. There is nothing in the world more invisible than these statues. There can be no doubt, however, that they are not erected to be seen, but to attract attention; however, at the same time they are waterproofed, in a sense, and attention is showered on them like water on an impregnated garment, without dwelling on them for a single moment'.[812]

This phenomenon is consistent with the twofold movement of digital globalisation and the reclamation of dominated memories. The aim is to destroy material commemorative signs that occupy public spaces and constitute an urban historical narrative. However, this is what I would call 'creative destruction', unlike the nihilistic anti-heritage tendency of terrorist Islamism. Indeed, the challenge is to denounce a vision of history that gives prominence to iconic figures that have become unacceptable within the framework of an alternative narration of this history that calls on other values, other figures, and other events. On June 16, 2020, on the base of the statue of Joseph Gallieni, the Marshal of France, in Paris, there was graffiti

811 Yuliya Yurchuk, « Dé-canonisation du passé soviétique : abject, kitsch et mémoire en Ukraine », in Sarah Gensburger & Jenny Wüstenberg, *Dé-commémoration. Quand le monde déboulonne des statues et renomme les rues*, Paris, Fayard, 2023, p.128 – 134.

812 Cited by Daniel Fabre, « Introduction. Habiter les monuments », *Les monuments sont habités* [online]. Paris: Éditions de la Maison des Sciences de l'Homme, 2010 (generated May 28, 2022).

that read as follows: 'Let's debunk the official narrative'. Gallieni is a hero of World War I, but also a symbol of colonisation, in Madagascar in particular.

Since the mid-1970s, a movement has been developing in the West to redress the 'silences of history'[813] and give a voice to the 'invisible'. A new call for memory and recognition is developing around new categories of victims presumed to have been 'forgotten by history': slaves and colonised, 'first' or 'indigenous' peoples, women[814]. In Canada, to cite just this example, a re-reading of history is in progress following the rise of social interest in 'indigenous peoples', i.e. peoples who have been colonised by Europeans. Museums have been dedicated to these peoples. In August 2017, John A. Macdonald, the very first head of government of the Canadian federation 150 years ago, was called into question. The Elementary Teachers' Federation of Ontario called for all schools in the province with 'John-A.-Macdonald' in their name to be renamed, recalling that he was 'the architect of the genocide perpetrated against the Aboriginal peoples'.[815] A national inquiry has been launched into 'Missing and murdered indigenous women and girls'.[816]

Another underlying issue, but which is rarely expressed as such, is the 'making of urban heritage' other than by resorting to 'hero' figures, heroes who are often soldiers (Lee, Faidherbe, Bugeaud, Gallieni, etc.) and referring to a warrior history that is over-represented in the statues on display. 'Personified monumentality'[817] is one method of evoking history that is now being called into question. In this sense, the wave of statue-toppling can have a beneficial effect. We should take inspiration from the sculptor Auguste Bartholdi, who, to represent the heroic defeat of Colonel Denfert-Rochereau and his men against the Prussians in 1870, imagined a lion in the 'quiet strength' mode.[818] The aim should be to 'de-heroise' and 'decondition' memory. It should also be to present history other than through, to quote

813 Michelle Perrot, *Les femmes ou le silence de l'histoire*, Paris, Flammarion, 1998

814 Judith Butler, *Gender Trouble: Feminism and the Subversion of Identity*, New York, Routledge, 1990–2006; Éric Fassin, « Le genre aux États-Unis et en France », *Agora débats/jeunesses*, 41, 2006. Jeunes, genre et société, p. 12–21.

815 https://nationalpost.com/news/canada/here-is-what-sir-john-a-macdonald-did-to-indigenous-people

816 https://www.mmiwg-ffada.ca/wp-content/uploads/2019/06/Final_Report_Vol_2_Quebec_Report-1.pdf

817 Laure Murat, *Qui annule quoi?*, Paris, Seuil Libelle, 2022, p. 22.

818 See Chapter 1.

Fernand Braudel, 'quintessential heroes'[819]. This is the case in particular given that every 'hero' has their dark side, including Abraham Lincoln, Theodore Roosevelt, Victor Schœlcher, Churchill, and Gandhi. However, we must not forget that there are 'heroes' to whom monuments have been erected and who have expressed an ideology that is openly contrary to the values system on which democracies are based, creating a contradiction that protest movements bring to light. The intention of any personalised monument that presents a man as an example is to 'edify' history. It is precisely for this reason that in Belgium, statues of Leopold II are the subject of lively and recurring challenges from anti-colonialists, and that, referring to colonial policy, the figure of Jules Ferry in France is also increasingly pilloried. Jules Ferry is an iconic figure in French republican mythology for having, at the turn of the 1880s, eliminated the influence of the Church on schools and instituted fundamentally secular education. But since the early 2000s, it is the memory of the coloniser who did not believe in the equality of races that has dominated.[820] France has also been confronted with 'statues of discord' by a re-reading of the history of slavery and colonisation that has resulted in vandalism and destruction.[821] But the issues at stake in 'cancel culture' must be of concern to the social sciences: why should the debunkings indicate, not a desire to erase history, but a demand for a paradigm shift in our readings of history, which would be a return to the epistemological revolution proposed by Fernand Braudel[822]? The 'cancel culture' carries with it the crisis of the 'great men'[823].

In the United States, it is the dominated memory of African-Americans that claims its place in the symbolic public space. However, it is also the will to fight against a system that expresses a racist vision of history. There, moral reparation involves the suppression of heritage. This phenomenon gained traction with the 'Black Lives Matter' movement[824], which was founded in 2013 following the acquittal of the police officer who killed

819 Fernand Braudel, « Les responsabilités de l'Histoire », *Cahiers internationaux de sociologie*, vol. 10, 1951, p.3 – 18.

820 Carole Reynaud Paligot, *La République raciale, 1860–1930*, Paris, PUF, 2006.

821 Jacqueline Lalouette, *Les statues de la discorde*, Passés/Composés-Humensis, 2021.

822 Emmanuel Furiex, « Déboulonnages et dévoilements : l'histoire en morceaux? », *Écrire l'histoire*, 20–21 | 2021, 229–232.

823 Jacqueline Lalouette, *Un peuple de statues. La célébration sculptée des grands hommes (1804-2018),* Paris, Mare et Martin, 2018.

824 Brianne McGonigle Leyh, 'Imperatives of the Present: Black Lives Matter and the politics of memory and memorialization', *Netherlands Quarterly of Human Rights*, *38*(4), 239–245.

black teenager Trayvon Martin. In 2015, 20-year-old Dylann Roof killed nine black people at a church in Charleston, South Carolina, which sparked a movement to remove the Confederate flag from public buildings. This flag was created in 1861, when the 11 Southern states seceded from the Union. It has become the symbol of slavery. South Carolina then decided to remove the flag from public spaces. This decision led to demonstrations, in particular by the Ku Klux Klan. This emblem was worn by some of the individuals involved in the siege on the Capitol in Washington on January 6, 2021. In Charlottesville on August 12, 2017, white supremacist activists (Unite the Right Rally) gathered around the statue of General Lee, the General in Chief of the Armies of the Confederate States. The statue was erected in 1924. This prompted a counter-protest, at which a young woman, Heather Heyer, was killed. She, in turn, would become a heroine of the fight against racism. The fire was smouldering beneath the ashes.

In May 2017, Mitch Landrieu, the mayor of New Orleans, decided to enforce the municipal decision to remove Confederate statues (Robert E. Lee, Jefferson Davis, P.G.T. Beauregard) from his city, including one erected in favour of a racist association, the White League. Controversy arose: By removing these statues from public spaces, wasn't the mayor of New Orleans denying history? He correctly countered that these statues were designed and erected as ideological messages and not as a testimony to history. On May 19, 2017, Landrieu made an impassioned speech about why he was removing these statues in his city:

> 'The statues were not honoring history, or heroes. They were created as political weapons, part of an effort to hide the truth, which is that the Confederacy was on the wrong side of not just of history, but of humanity. The monuments helped distort history, putting forth a myth of Southern chivalry, the gallant "Lost Cause", to distract from the terror tactics that deprived African Americans of fundamental rights from the Reconstruction years through Jim Crow until the civil rights movement and the federal court decisions, of the 1960s.'[825]

We have discovered that the Confederate memory has been the subject of a policy of systematic lobbying to build and develop a public heritage around Confederate values since the end of the 19th century. The spearhead of this movement was the Southern Women's Heritage Association, which was

825 https://www.milwaukeeindependent.com/featured/the-problem-with-white-americas-enduring-love-affair-of-the-confederacy/

created in Nashville in 1894 to officially commemorate Confederate soldiers and fund the erection of memorials. The 'Daughters of the Confederacy' donated a stained glass window to the Washington National Cathedral in 1953. This stained glass window represents General Lee. In September 2017, cathedral officials launched a debate in the parish community on whether the presence of this stained glass window was 'appropriate' in this 'sacred' place.

The finding is clear: the process of patrimonialisation is fraught with ideological issues, where history is instrumentalised. The Confederates lost the war, but did not recognise their defeat (they referred to the war as 'the War of Northern Aggression'). This civil war led to the death of 620,000 soldiers: 360,000 Unionist soldiers and 260,000 Confederacy soldiers. Despite his surrender at Appomattox on April 9, 1865, General Lee became a hero. The Confederates did not renounce their 'sacred cause', i.e. the fight for racism. They may have lost the War of Secession,[826] but wanted to win the ideological war. This memorial battle of revenge involves a statuary narrative structuring the public space; in fact, it could be said that there has been a 'victory of Southern memory at the national level'.[827] There are 1,500 monuments dedicated to the Confederates. Yet many of these monuments were erected well after the Civil War, in two waves: from the 1890s to the 1930s, and from the 1950s to the mid-1960s. As the historian Jane Dailey (University of Chicago) put it, in many cases the purpose of these monuments was not to celebrate the past, but rather to promote a 'future white supremacy'[828]. At the end of the 19th century, 'dominant whites crafted a cohesive narrative designed to entrench their superiority in the South'.[829] And it is this instrumentalisation of history that is denounced by the current proponents of the policy of toppling statues.

826 Duncan Andrew Campbell, « La guerre de Sécession », *Revue d'histoire du XIX^e siècle*, 35 | 2007, 141–159.

827 Marie-Jeanne Rossignol, « Les statues des confédérés dans l'espace public aux États-Unis : Pourra-t-on en finir avec *une mauvaise cause*? », *Transatlantica* [Online], 1 | 2017, Online since November 27, 2018.

828 Jane Dailey, 'Baltimore's Confederate monument was never about "history and culture"', *The Huffington Post*, 17 August 2017.

829 Robert J. Cook, *Civil War Memories: Contesting the Past in the United States since 1865*, Baltimore, Johns Hopkins University Press, 2017.

Is 'hiding the offence' not unlike 'hiding the story'?[830] However, removing a heritage symbol is not akin to erasing history, since history has other places and other methods to express itself. Moreover, this wave of questioning public statues has been an opportunity for Americans to be confronted with their past (the reactivation of the memory of a civil war and a memorial conflict), with their present (the integration of African-Americans), and the philosophical foundations of their democracy. It has been found that the 1776 Declaration of Independence includes the following sentence: 'We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their creators with certain inalienable rights, among which are life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness.' There has been a desynchronisation effect of American memory. The rise of the white supremacist movement and the wave of statue-toppling coincided with President Obama's inauguration of the National Museum of African American History and Culture in Washington, D.C., a decision made by G.W. Bush in 2003.

Black Live Matter' is perhaps less a moment than a long-term movement. It tells us something about the 'circularity' that links history, memory and heritage. In effect, this socio-political movement, specific to one country, has become a global phenomenon, formalising the demand for a different kind of memory and a different kind of world history, a more inclusive history[831].

This example illustrates the ambivalence and the reversibility of heritage and of its uses: it can unite, but it can also maintain the 'clash of memories'[832] and even provoke violence. This violence can, in turn, carry a promise of reconciliation and reparation, and embody a call to make history differently. As Kristin Ross says, we need to 'unlearn what we think we know about the past', because 'the past is unpredictable'.[833]

830 Anne Lafont, « Violences monumentales. Peut-on désarmer les symboles ? », *Esprit*, May 2022, no. 2022, p. 88.

831 Kathryn Speckart, *Black Lives Matter and the Push for Colonial-Era Cultural Heritage Restitution*, 72 Cath. UL Rev. 99, 2023. https://scholarship.law.edu/lawreview/vol72/iss2/8

832 William Fitzhugh Brundage, *The Southern Past: A Clash of Race and Memory*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2005.

833 Kristin Ross, « Le passé est imprévisible », *Ballast*, 3 november 2020. https://www.revue-ballast.fr/kristin-ross-le-passe-est-imprevisible/

Conclusion

Contrary to popular belief, it could be said that heritage in itself does not exist in the sense that it is not the inviolable, indisputable, and immutable refuge of the memory of societies: it is a reflection of a society at a given time. Recent events calling into question a dominant patrimonial heritage illustrate the thesis according to which heritage 'is caught in the historical process of continuous adjustment of the values that govern collective life'.[834] If heritage has a virtue of resilience, should one not ask what suffering it can bring to an end, and how it could do this? The suffering of what has disappeared or will disappear; the pain of death, loss, or destruction; the suffering of abandonment, indifference, and contempt. This suffering can concern people, nations, the environment (material and immaterial), and ways of life. It can be experienced individually or collectively. We can also evoke the suffering of the non-recognition of past suffering (discrimination, colonial domination, loss of territory or identity, the death of one's family, absence, etc.). Its main source is trauma that has been denied, not recognised as heritage, and not assumed.

The resilient strength of heritage action is precisely this ability to recognise what caused suffering in order to overcome it, to overcome the past, and to resynchronise the time before and the time after. Thus, heritage is also a process of remembering the suffering associated with disappearance, oblivion, contempt, and denial. There would thus be a relationship between resilience and 'reliance', i.e. this 'chronophanic' possibility of linking the past and the present for a future presented as better. Reconnecting with the past to unravel suffering, thwart loss, and reinvent the future by rebuilding, by 'repairing'.

For the appropriation of the collective memory of pain or loss as heritage to be able to have a 'resilience' effect, as described in this document, a set of conditions must be met so that the return to the past is not an alibi, a manipulation, or a placebo. At the same time, it is important not to overestimate the capacity to reconcile and repair heritage by attributing magical powers to it. Jacques Lacan's warning is still valid today: 'We do not remember because we are cured. We are cured because we remember.'[835]

834 Anne Lafont, « Patrimoines contestés », *Esprit*, May 2022, no. 2022, p. 39.

835 Cited by Adam Philips, *On Flirtation*, Cambridge, Harvard University Press, 1994, p. 67.