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## **Dynamics of Scale in the Making of a European Cultural Heritage in EU Heritage Policy**

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### **Abstract:**

The trans- and supranational dimensions of heritage have become topical in a new way in Europe, as the idea of a European cultural heritage has been more and more frequently referred to in the political discourses of the EU and as the EU has recently launched several initiatives which aim to make the idea more concrete. This paper focuses on the dynamics of scale in the making of a European cultural heritage in the EU heritage initiatives and asks: How is the idea of a European cultural heritage formed through territoriality and scale and with what political effects?

### **Introduction**

During the past decades the EU has become increasingly interested in the idea of a cultural heritage. This interest is in line with the EU’s broader cultural political frameworks and discourses. Already the Maastricht Treaty presented a treaty article explicitly focused on culture, aimed at “bringing the common cultural heritage to the fore” (TEU 1992, 24). In the 2000s, the idea of a common cultural heritage has been brought out in several EU resolutions, agendas, and work plans for culture; it has become a common element repeated in EU cultural policy discourse. In addition, both the European Commission and the Parliament have recently launched several cultural initiatives that explicitly seek to foster and promote a common cultural heritage in Europe and make the idea of it more concrete

The idea of a common European cultural heritage is extremely problematic. It faces various challenges in Europe, where national narrations of history and cultural memories differ greatly and where global cultural flows and movement of people within and across borders have increased the inner pluralism of the continent. Several surveys indicate that the definitions of national and European heritage vary considerably from one country to another (EC 2007; IPSOS 2007). Indeed, the notions of a European cultural heritage lack conceptual integrity and vary with the location and the occasion (Nic Craith 2012, 19).

In EU cultural policy discourse, the idea of a common European cultural heritage is, however, referred to without further discussion on the conceptual, ideological, and political limitations that it entails. References to the idea in the EU’s policy documents and official communication material of the Commission and the Parliament form EU-level “Authorized Heritage Discourse” (AHD)—in Smith’s (2006) terms. This discourse is thoroughly political in its attempts to create its object, i.e., a common European cultural heritage, by ignoring the ambiguity and controversiality included in the idea and simultaneously retaining its flexibility

for various political purposes. Scale has a major role in the formation of the EU-level “Authorized Heritage Discourse” and the political attempts included in it.

Cultural geographers have emphasized how both tangible and intangible heritage always occur somewhere, and thus they are spatial (Graham, Ashworth & Tunbridge 2000). The spatiality of heritage simultaneously turns it into both a scalar and a territorial phenomenon. EU heritage policy discourse includes both explicit and implicit scalarly structured meanings and power relations. A ‘European dimension’ and ‘European significance’ are produced in the discourse in relation to various territorial scales—local, regional, national, and global—either by including these different scales in the European dimension or by defining it as distinguished from other scales. EU heritage policy discourse includes discussions in which the meanings of heritage are multi-layered and ‘multi-scalar’, referring not only to territorial but also non-territorial divisions. Indeed, Harvey (2015) has emphasized how the relationship between the idea of heritage and scale can be an open, plural, and relational process detached from physical distance, proximity, or essentialist claims to territorial hierarchy.

This paper focuses on the dynamics of scale in the making of a European cultural heritage in EU heritage policy discourse. The paper theorizes the heritage-scale relationship in this discourse by answering the following questions: What kinds of territorialities and scales are discussed in EU heritage policy discourse? What kinds of territorial and scalar relationships are formed in this discourse and with what political effects? The paper seeks to answer these questions by examining the official policy documents of the European Commission’s most recent heritage initiative, the European Heritage Label (EHL). These documents are scrutinized with qualitative content analysis, utilizing the theoretical framework of linguistic turn and social constructionism in the EU and European Studies that emphasize the use of language, conceptualization, and rhetoric as locations in which meanings are both consciously and unconsciously produced (see e.g. Diez 1999; Christiansen, Jorgensen & Wiener 2001; Paasi 2001; Risse 2004; Checkel 2006). The theoretical framework of this interdisciplinary investigation stems from critical heritage studies, political science, and cultural geography.

The article proceeds from a theoretical discussion on the scalarity of heritage to a presentation of a case initiative, empirical data, and methods. The analysis of the data explores the scale-heritage relationship a) in the operational implementation of the initiative and b) in the meaning-making of ‘European significance’. The article ends with a discussion on the politics included in the scale-heritage relationship in EU heritage policy discourse.

## **Scalarity of Heritage**

Many recent heritage studies have sought to deconstruct the Authorized Heritage Discourse by disclosing its political attempts and criticizing the power hierarchies included in it and produced by it. Particularly, the studies have focused on a national frame of reference as the main arbiter of values and promoter of AHD (Harvey 2015). Despite the recent criticism, AHD still has a central role in heritage policies, practices, and funding schemes. AHD and the management of heritage are predominantly arranged along a hierarchy of spatial scales in which a national framework has played—and still commonly plays—a central role. As Harvey (2015, 579) notes, “the mechanisms through which such a discourse operates, however, appear to be more elusive and less structural”. Indeed, AHD often includes “an attribute of dissonance, not only in a sense of identity and meaning, but also in terms of scale” (Harvey 2015, 579).

Various studies by cultural geographers have explored and explained the spatial meanings of heritage created in diverse heritage discourses and practices. However, Harvey (2015) has argued that many of these studies are excessively place-bound, ignoring the relational nature of spatial borders and the fluidity of ideas related to territorial entities. This criticism is justified, as even theoretical studies on spatiality of heritage seem to commonly entail an extremely stiff and categorical notion of scalar structure. For example, Graham, Ashworth, and Tunbridge (2000, 4) describe the heritage-scale relationship as follows:

Scale: an intrinsic attribute of places is that they exist within a hierarchy of spatial scales. Places therefore have a heritage at local, regional, national, continental and international scales, while, in turn, a particular heritage artefact can function at a variety of scales.

Indeed, several theoretical studies on the heritage-scale relationship have explained heritage as “exist[ing] within nested spatial-scale hierarchies” (Ashworth 1994, 13). In this scalar hierarchy, local, regional, national, European, and global levels form an unproblematic spatial system in which each ‘broader’ scope transcends the previous ‘narrower’ scope, as the following figure by Ashworth and Graham (1997, 382) illustrates:

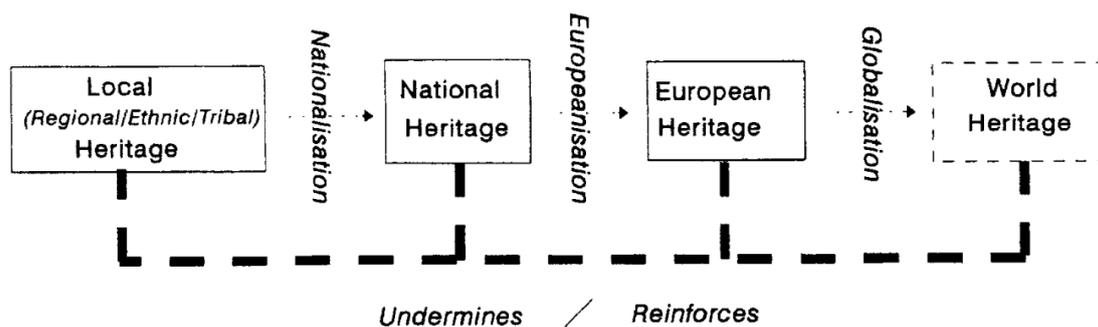


Figure 1. Interaction of heritage at different spatial scales. (Source: Ashworth and Graham 1997, 382)

Understanding the spatial meanings of heritage within this kind of scalar system affixes the meanings of heritage to a specific spatial hierarchy of territories—to a village/town/city, a municipality, a region, a nation, or a continent. Several scholars (e.g. Paasi 2009; Paasi & Zimmerbauer 2013) have emphasized how the relationships of territories are dynamic and how the scalar system of territories could be rather understood as a fluid and transforming process. All the aforementioned spatial entities have their own territorial shape—boundaries that emerge and exist in various social practices, such as culture, governance, politics, and economy, and that are instrumental in distinguishing them and their identities from others (Paasi 2009, 467). Territories and their boundaries are, however, in a constant process of institutionalization and deinstitutionalization (see Paasi 2004; Paasi and Zimmerbauer 2013), and value-loaded and symbolic cultural elements such as heritage function as tools in this process.

One of the key functions of preserving and fostering heritage in AHD is to produce or strengthen a feeling of belonging to and identifying with a community. Commonly, the communities that are at the focus of AHD have an established territorial shape. The promotion

of local, regional, and national “place-identities” has a more established tradition compared e.g., with the supra-national scale of community building (Ashworth 1994, 13). Although national-level identity building has received much criticism during the past decades, it is still powerfully advanced. Although the notion of identity is commonly described in contemporary studies as multiply constructed and its diverse layers or dimensions conceptualized as “overlapping”, “nested”, “cross-cutting”, “mixed”, “hybrid”, or “co-existing” (see, e.g., Delanty & Rumford 2005, 51; Risse 2010, 23–25; Kohli 2000), the need of individuals to belong to territorially defined communities has not ceased (Ashworth, Graham & Tunbridge 2007, 1–2; Graham & Howard 2008, 7). The national frame still functions as one of the most common scalar levels in both the promotion of a communal identity and the communal meanings of heritage (cf. Graham, Ashworth & Tunbridge 2000, 259).

The territorial shapes of spatial entities, the scalar hierarchy of territories and their identities, and the scalar meanings of heritage have become more complex due to the pluralization of contemporary societies. Indeed, the national dimension of identity and heritage has faced various challenges in a world characterized by global cultural flows and movement of people within and across borders. Various studies have focused on this challenge and have brought to the fore how promotion of a national heritage may entail various conflicting interests and processes of exclusion (e.g., Lowenthal 1998; Ashworth, Graham & Tunbridge 2007). Beside the national dimension, heritagization processes have also increasingly focused on regional and local issues (Ashworth, Graham & Tunbridge 2007, 2). Respectively, various scholars have recently been interested in “downscaling” or “upscaling” the focus of their research; recent studies have explored community, family, and even personal forms of heritage, as well as a universal understanding of heritage (Harvey 2015, 577).

Territorial shapes and identities are relational and constantly transforming, both historically and theoretically. Similarly, space is a relational construction that simultaneously includes diverse scalar dimensions and multiple collectively shared and personal meanings (Massey 2005). Like space and identities, heritage can be perceived as a multi-layered and multi-scalar phenomenon. Certain layers of meanings of heritage are activated in certain discourses, policies, and practices at different scalar levels. Thus, the same heritage object or site can be used to foster and promote several territorial identities or feelings of belonging to different communities. However, scale does not only determine the relationships of territories and territorial identities; it also influences non-territorial social and cultural divisions, such as divisions into public and personal, young and old, or official and un-official (cf. Ashworth & Graham 2005; Ashworth, Graham & Tunbridge 2007; Kean 2008). As Harvey (2015, 579) notes, attempts to understand how heritage works requires a deeper examination of “what scale does, and how heritage and scale interact”.

## **Data and Methods**

The European Heritage Label (EHL) is the most recent official EU heritage action. It was launched as an intergovernmental scheme in 2006 and by 2011, 67 sites were awarded the label. The initiative was considered difficult to effectively implement on an intergovernmental basis due to the lack of common coordination and possibilities for operational arrangements (Lähdesmäki 2014a). The scheme was, however, seen important by the European Parliament and the Council of the European Union, and in 2008 the Council adopted conclusions transforming the initiative into an official EU action. Previously awarded sites were required to reapply for the label. In the official action, the labeled sites are first pre-selected at the

national level, the final selection is made by an expert panel appointed at the EU level, and the labels are awarded by the European Commission. So far, 29 sites<sup>1</sup> have been awarded the renewed label. Altogether 24 EU member states have announced their participation in the initiative. The label is awarded permanently, and as such, it resembles the more well-known UNESCO World Heritage Label.

The data of this study consist of EU policy documents produced during the preparation, launch, and implementation phases of the EHL initiative. These documents include, e.g., the proposal of the initiative by the European Commission; the decision on the initiative by the European Parliament and the Council; guidelines of the European Commission for the candidate sites and national coordinators of the initiative; EHL application forms; and preparatory documents of the initiative produced by different EU administrative bodies. The data were gathered from EUR-Lex, a database of legal texts of the EU, the official web site of the European Commission, and the official web site of the secretariat of the initiative during its intergovernmental phase.

The analysis of scalarity of the ‘European significance’ of the EHL sites focuses particularly on panel reports produced by the European panel of independent experts in the selection process of the EHL sites in the three first selection rounds in 2013, 2014, and 2015. The panel members, 13 altogether, are appointed by the European Parliament, the Council, the Commission, and the Committee of Regions. In the panel reports, the sites and their ‘European significance’ are described and the final selections for awarding the label are justified. The reports include an evaluation of all the applicant sites that have passed pre-selection at the national level, but in this study, the analysis focuses particularly on the sites that were finally awarded the EHL. The reports enable a critical exploration of what is considered a ‘right’ type of Europeanness in EU heritage policy discourse and how it is presented and justified. The panel reports are linked to each site respectively at the website of the Commission, and hence the descriptions in the reports can be read as ‘official representations’ of the sites. It can be assumed that many of the ideas and probably also some of the linguistic formulations used in the reports are chosen and directly cited from the applications of the sites (cf. Lähdesmäki 2014, 77).

Based on the speech act theory (Austin 1982), discourses concerning a European cultural heritage can be interpreted as acts that bring about the notion of it instead of describing the existing or ‘real’ state of affairs. The article scrutinizes how language produces a European cultural heritage and a scale-heritage relationship in the EHL documents. The data are therefore analyzed using qualitative content analysis with a special focus on vocabulary and linguistic expressions referring to scalar issues in the EHL documents. The first reading of the data followed the conventional orientation of qualitative content analysis that emphasizes the inductive logic of enquiry (see e.g. Hickey and Kipping, 1996; Hsieh and Shannon, 2005). The purpose of the first reading was to make a thematic disposition of the scalar vocabulary used in the data by examining what kinds of issues were presented as scalar in it and how. Secondly, the directed orientation of the method (see e.g. Hickey and Kipping, 1996; Hsieh and Shannon, 2005) was applied to analyze how, to what matters, and in which contexts the ideas of nested territorial scales—common in both theoretical and empirical discussions on heritage—were used in the EHL documents. Finally, the relationships of different scales and scalar dispositions constructed in the data and their implications for the identity politics of the EU were scrutinized. The chosen method and its linguistic emphasis enabled exploration of both explicit and implicit politics and power relations involved in EU heritage policy discourse.

## **Analysis of Territorial and Scalar Relations in EU Heritage Policy Discourse**

### *Operational Scales in the Implementation of the EHL Initiative*

The European Heritage Label documents manifest the Authorized Heritage Discourse of the EU. This discourse is based on a top-down policy with specific procedural rules and listed criteria that the applicants have to fulfill to receive the label. Although the governing power in the EHL initiative lies at the EU level, both the procedural policy in the initiative and EU heritage policy discourse seek to engage local heritage actors in the implementation of the initiative and thus get them to foster and promote the idea of a common European cultural heritage and identity based thereupon. As the European expert panel notes in its selection report:

The success of the European Heritage Label relies foremost on the willingness of candidate sites to participate; therefore the list of labeled sites will always be different from a theoretical list prepared by experts based upon scientific criteria. The vitality and attractiveness of the European Heritage Label will depend also on how the labeled sites use this recognition themselves. (EC 2015, 5)

Thus, the top-down policy of the initiative includes a bottom-up dimension that is, however, carefully governed and controlled at the EU level. Although the initiative includes given frameworks in which local heritage actors have to describe and promote their sites as European, it enables the actors to interpret the idea of Europe and Europeanness in their own way—and thus use their discursive power in the creation of a European cultural heritage (Lähdesmäki 2014). This form of governance is also used in other EU cultural actions (Sassatelli 2006, 30). Although EU cultural actions and policies are often criticized for top-down elitism, they nevertheless often include polyvocal, bottom-up processes promoted by policies that encourage transnational interaction and networking of local-level actors (Sassatelli 2015, 38).

The EHL initiative focuses particularly on heritage sites; the label can be awarded to various kinds of tangible and intangible heritage, but in both cases “there must be a link to a clearly identifiable physical space in which the information and educational activities will be carried out”, as the Guide for the Implementation of the European Heritage Label (EC 2014, 4) advises. Thus, the concrete physical focus of the initiative is on a spatial microscale of heritage.

Although the EHL sites and heritage actors working in them have a key role in the policy procedure and the implementation of the initiative, the discourse in the EHL policy documents nevertheless constantly brings out the national scale in the making of a European cultural heritage. Indeed, the selection process of the EHL sites relies on a pre-selection at the national level, followed by the final selection at the EU level. The key ‘gatekeepers’ of a European cultural heritage in the EHL initiative are the national- and EU-level panel members. In the preparation phase of the initiative, both of these levels were seen essential for its effective and democratic functioning. The EU level was needed to “ensure both a robust application of criteria and appropriate prominence for the European dimension, whilst also preserving an equitable distribution of sites across the European Union” (EC 2010a, 6). The “overseeing body at European level” (EC 2010a, 6) was considered to democratize the idea of a European cultural heritage by transferring decision-making on a European dimension of heritage to a panel of independent experts instead of letting the member states themselves decide on it. In addition, the importance of “a fair geographical distribution of labels across the EU” (EC 2010b, 12)

was raised in the preparation phase when arguing for the need for national pre-selection panels; representatives of national authorities highlighted that only national pre-selection panels can ensure a balanced representation of all member states in the initiative and thus in the making of a European cultural heritage. It was seen important that the sites are selected equally from different member states, even though some countries have “a greater pool of relevant sites than others” (EC 2010b, 12). Thus, the same argument—fair distribution and balanced representation—was used to justify both the European and national panels in the EHL selection process.

Since the launch of the EHL initiative in 2007, one of its main operational goals has been to “reinforce cooperation between European countries” (European Heritage Committee 2007). Also current EHL policy discourse emphasizes the importance of active transnational cooperation and participation in European heritage networks. The national scale determines the idea of cooperation in this discourse; transregional, translocal, and extra-European cooperation do not belong in the vocabulary or aims of the initiative. The territorial starting point of the discourse is in distinct European countries. The candidate sites are expected to be either single sites from a particular member state; joint “national thematic sites”; or “transnational sites”, that is, “the case of sites which are located in different Member States but focus on one specific theme” or “the case of a site located on the territory of at least two Member States” (EC 2011, 2). Even though the policy discourse of the initiative brings out the transnational dimension, the key operational scale in the initiative is still closely affixed to states. The operational focus is on a national territory, yet the border is intended to be crossed through cooperation between heritage actors from different countries and by interpreting the meanings of heritage in a transnational framework. The idea of crossing the borders of states is, however, based on the idea of the continuity of these states and their territorial borders.

### *Scales in the Meaning Making of ‘European Significance’*

The European scale is the most relevant scalar dimension discussed in the policy documents concerning the European Heritage Label. According to the decision, the EHL action shall aim at

strengthening European citizens’ sense of belonging to the Union, [--] stressing the symbolic value and raising the profile of sites which have played a significant role in the history and culture of Europe and/or the building of the Union; increasing European citizens’ understanding of the history of Europe and the building of the Union, and of their common yet diverse cultural heritage. (EP 2011, 3; EC 2010a, 5)

The aims focus on citizens’ relationship to the EU; the EHL sites are given a role of providing this relationship with strength and understanding. To fulfill this function, the sites are expected to have a tight connection to Europe and the EU.

The same ideas are repeated in the criteria of the initiative: “Candidate sites for the label must have a symbolic European value and must have played a significant role in the history and culture of Europe and/or the building of the Union” (EP 2011, 4). The decision of the initiative emphasizes that the main selection criteria do not include esthetic or architectural values of the site nor is the point in conservation or preserving the site (EC 2010a, 2). Instead, the most important selection criteria are how well the sites represent “their place and role in the

development and promotion of the common values that underpin European integration” and in “European history and European integration, and their links with key European events, personalities or movements” (EP 2011, 4). What is central is the “European narrative of these sites and their symbolism for Europe” (EC 2010a, 2). No matter how interesting or significant a site is, if it does not succeed in describing its “cross-border or pan-European nature” (EP 2011, 4), it cannot be awarded the label. This is underlined also on the official website of the EHL, in comparison with the UNESCO World Heritage List: “the European Heritage Label focuses on the European narrative and how the sites have contributed to the progress of European history and unity” (EC 2016).

The entire EHL initiative is about scaling cultural heritage into a European framework, and its key aim of highlighting European significance (EP 2011, 3) is extended also and above all to the sites that apply and eventually are awarded as EHL sites (Council 2008, 11; EC 2010a, 2). To understand the meaning of scale in the Authorized Heritage Discourse of the EU, it is crucial to explore how the idea of ‘European significance’ is produced in relation to scale, territoriality, and spatiality in EU heritage policy discourse. How—against these aims and criteria—is the ‘European significance’ of the EHL sites described in the selection reports of the European expert panel?

Common to almost all EHL sites is that their ‘European significance’ is primarily justified with arguments about the plurality of territorial entities or population groups involved in the history of the site. For example, the *Hambach Castle* is described as commemorating the Hambach Festival, with participants from Germany, France, and Poland advocating for unity in both Germany and Europe. Its ‘European significance’ is conceptualized in the panel report by referring to the calls for a unified Europe by different national groups and to the cross-border action and context of the site. Indeed, border crossings and cross-border contexts are commonly referred to in the descriptions of the labeled sites. *Museo Casa Alcide De Gasperi* has, according to the panel report, a “transboundary history and location between the Italian and German cultures” (EC 2014, 18). *The Historic Gdańsk Shipyard* is presented as the birthplace of political transformation, first in one country and later in several countries in Central and Eastern Europe. *Pan-European Picnic Memorial Park* as a venue of processes that led to the collapse of the Iron Curtain in Europe is presented in the report as a symbol of the end of the Cold War and of a “borderless Europe” (EC 2014, 20).

Although cultural heritage and its ‘European significance’ in the panel reports are mostly attached to the plurality of territorial scales, the plurality discussed in them is not only territorial. For example, *World War I Eastern Front Cemetery No. 123* is described as a cemetery for soldiers from “different linguistic and religious backgrounds [--] where all soldiers, winners or defeated, were treated with equal respect regardless of the nationality, religion, or military affiliation” (EC 2015, 13). The *Franja Partisan Hospital*, maintained by the Yugoslav underground army in the territories occupied by the Third Reich during WWII, was a place where staff and wounded “from various nationalities and from the enemy” (EC 2014, 16) met. The description of *The Imperial Palace* states that “[t]he Habsburg Empire included a wide range of ethnicities and religions” (EC 2015, 9). As these examples indicate, the reports refer to linguistic, religious, and ethnic plurality, which does not necessarily organize itself along territorial scales.

The ‘European significance’ of some EHL sites is linked to unions between states, and some of these unions are presented in the panel reports as early models for European integration. For example, *Archaeological Park Carnuntum* is framed as part of the Roman Empire, which is

called a “predecessor of Europe”, combining “different cultures, religions, and geographic areas under one administrative system” (EC 2013, 7). Europe seems to be here a synonym for the EU, as it often is in other EU texts, as well. In the description of the *Great Guild Hall*, the interaction between two economic unions—the Great Guild and the Hanseatic League—is seen as a predecessor of European integration. *The Olomouc Premyslid Castle and Archdiocesan Museum* is introduced as part of Carolingian Europe, and *The Imperial Palace* as the center of the Habsburg Empire. National and transnational scales are dominant in these unions and empires, which consist of several states or state-like entities. These sites make it explicit that state unions have existed in the history of Europe, thus making the EU seem a ‘natural result’ of history. Three sites—*Robert Schuman’s House*, *Museo Casa Alcide De Gasperi*, and *The European District of Strasbourg*—are directly about the history of EU integration, a transnational process that has been predominantly about cooperation between states, with national-scale actors as key players.

In the case of several sites, such as the *Archive of the Crown of Aragon*, *The Neanderthal Prehistoric Site and Krapina Museum*, *Archaeological Park Carnuntum, Mundaneum*, and *The Heart of Ancient Athens*, ‘European significance’ is described through their place in intellectual history. In them, ‘European significance’ is constructed from non-territorial international exchange that does not locate itself in scales but rather thematically around different spheres of intellectual life. In the panel report the *Abbey of Cluny*, for instance, has contributed to “facilitating the circulation of people, books, artistic ideas and scientific knowledge across national borders” and “promotion of literacy and learning” (EC 2014, 6). Intellectual history and exchange are also referred to in the descriptions of scholarly sites such as the *General Library of the University of Coimbra* and *Residencia de Estudiantes*. *The Historic Ensemble of the University of Tartu* is said to have been a “part of a pan-European network of scientists and participated in cultural exchanges” (EC 2015, 10). *Franz Liszt Academy of Music* is described as a center of an international music community, developing “a living European cultural tradition” (EC 2015, 11).

Although values as such are non-territorial, they can be easily attached to scales and used in producing and imagining territorial communities, such as Europe. Indeed, one way to conceptualize the ‘European significance’ of the EHL sites in the panel reports is to emphasize values that are frequently repeated in EU policy discourse. According to the panel report, *Hambach Castle*, for instance, focuses on the Hambach Festival in which liberty, equality, tolerance, and democracy were called for. The description of *The Historic Gdańsk Shipyard* highlights the role of the Solidarity movement “in the development of freedom, justice, democracy and human rights” (EC 2014, 19). Democracy is brought to the fore in the descriptions of several sites and linked to the emergence of the EU, such as in the cases of *Museo Casa Alcide De Gasperi* and *The European District of Strasbourg*. Similarly, peace is a recurrent value in the panel reports. For example, *Mundaneum* is described as both a peace project and an archive, which promotes peace through culture and sharing of knowledge, and *Peace Palace* is described as having gained its ‘European significance’ by being the venue of the First World Peace Conference in 1899 and later peace conventions and international institutions. A discussion of values is a way to attach a site to the European scale, as these values are often said to underpin the European integration project. In the decision on the EHL initiative itself, democratic values and human rights are explicitly linked to European integration (EP 2011, 2). However, the emphasis on values in the panel reports is also a means to bring to the fore a micro-scale of heritage; European values are explained as being manifested in the actions of various important European figures. For example, *The Heart of Ancient Athens* is presented in the report as a venue of the birth and upbringing of persons

“whose intellectual achievements made an indelible mark on the definition of European common values” (EC 2014, 5). Hence, values are used in EHL policy discourse to connect spatial micro- and macro-scales of heritage.

In the panel reports, several sites are described and contextualized through the processes of establishing or transforming political systems or political institutions and principles. Political systems and institutions produce and are based on their polity that entail defined political borders. These political borders commonly align with territorial borders, such as borders of states or municipalities. The emphasis on political systems, institutions, or principles in EU heritage policy discourse can be interpreted as an attempt to create new territorial constructions or re-arrange territorial borders, but also as an attempt to affix abstract political ideas to EU-Europe (within or crossing existing borders) in order to present Europe as a cradle of these positive innovations. For example, *Sites of the Peace of Westphalia* concentrates on the Peace of Westphalia, in which “peace was agreed through diplomatic negotiations, not force” (EC 2014, 9), and as a result of the peace treaties new principles of a political system and international law were adopted, such as sovereign rights for peripheral states. *Union of Lublin* is described as establishing a new political system between the Kingdom of Poland and the Grand Duchy of Lithuania with democratic principles and practices. *The May 3, 1791 Constitution* is highlighted as “the first constitution democratically adopted in Europe” (EC 2014, 11) with the adoption of division of powers. *Hambach Castle* is called the “symbol of the pursuit of democracy in a cross-border context” (EC 2014, 12). *The historic Gdańsk Shipyard* and *Pan-European Picnic Memorial Park* tell about moves away from a socialist regime. In the panel report, the *Archive of the Crown of Aragon* “possesses one of the oldest testimonies of the creation process of a European state and rule of law including its parliamentary system” (EC 2014, 7). According to the description of *The Imperial Palace*, the entities included in the Habsburg Empire “developed an evolved status of citizenship including religious freedom and access to education” (EC 2015, 9). The description of the transformation of political systems and political principles in the reports thus includes a strong transnational emphasis, since the transformation processes entail various kinds of cross-border contexts and focus on different kinds of historical state unions and empires. However, these unions and their transnational political systems have their basis in the national scale; unions and transnational political actions occur between nations and/or states.

In addition to the European scale, other territorial scales are implicitly present in the descriptions of the panel reports, as well. Indeed, both distinct global, national, regional, and local scales and their interwoven combinations are used to argue the ‘European significance’ of the EHL sites. For example, *The Neanderthal Prehistoric Site and Krapina Museum* is located on the global scale in the panel report by highlighting how the site brings to the fore human development and the genesis of humankind. The global scale also characterizes *The Sagres Promontory*, which is introduced in the panel report through the history of discoveries. Its territorial scale is thus expanded out of Europe; the site is explained to show how European civilization has contributed to “the global projection that came to define the modern world” (EC 2015, 8). At some of the sites, global or universal phenomena, such as the themes of peace and human rights in *Mundaneum* and *Peace Palace*, are explicitly framed as European. Also, several sites, such as *The Historic Gdańsk Shipyard* and *Charter of Law of Abolition of the Death Penalty*, that have particular national importance, are narrated as European. Numerous references to the sites’ cross-border contexts, e.g. in *Hambach Castle* and *Pan-European Picnic Memorial Park*, bring to the fore the regional scale on which the crucial events and action at these sites have taken place. However, the regional scale of these sites focuses on transnational rather than sub-national regions, which implies the attempt to produce ‘the European’ through

‘the regional’. The transnational cross-border regions simultaneously highlight the national scale, as the regions in question are situated on state borders. *Residencia de Estudiantes*, *The Historic Ensemble of the University of Tartu*, *Great Guild Hall*, and *Kaunas of 1919–1940* are examples of sites that focus on a local scale but are presented as a European cultural heritage by emphasizing their international relationships rather than their local meanings. For instance, *Kaunas of 1919–1940* is described in the panel report as a “gateway to contemporary dynamic currents of interwar Europe [–] reflecting European interwar modernism” (EC 2014, 15). Here, local and European scales are intertwined: the city of Kaunas is local, but in the panel report the focus is on its international architectural connections. Obviously, the sites themselves are above all local; a European cultural heritage is pinpointed to very specific local places, thus bringing together a European and a local micro-scale of cultural heritage.

According to the EHL criteria, sites can focus on “key European [–] personalities” (EP 2011, 4), which brings in a non-territorial personal scale. These criteria were used in justifying the ‘European significance’ of several sites in the panel reports. For example, the ‘European significance’ of *The Heart of Ancient Athens* was emphasized by listing various influential historical personalities known from the city. Also the labeled home museum focuses on a personal scale. In addition, a private, intimate, or personal scale is evident at sites comprising a hospital, cemetery, or student residence. However, the themes tackled in the descriptions of the ‘European significance’ of these sites by the panel reports mainly concern their official and institutional history.

A relevant non-territorial scale inherent in cultural heritage is time. The time periods named in the descriptions of the sites’ ‘European significance’ in the panel reports include antiquity, Roman times, the Middle Ages, the Enlightenment, and the first and second World Wars. Cultural heritage is always temporally multilayered. Different temporal layers increase the ambiguous nature and complexity of heritage sites and enable the formation of various kinds of interpretations of their meanings. Although the EHL sites include various temporal layers, these layers nevertheless lose their temporal distance from each other and to the present day in EU heritage policy discourse. Indeed, various historical processes and phenomena that took place in the past are commonly interpreted in the panel reports as anticipating similar processes and phenomena that occur in the present EU. Particularly historical and present day transnational cooperation, democratic political processes, political integration, and societal and political values and principles are paralleled. The past and the present intertwine: in this process the history of the EU (as a process of international cooperation and as a political value community) seems to reach far back in the past.

The EHL sites—like all cultural heritage—include various kinds of meanings, several temporal layers, and different territorial and non-territorial scales. The analysis of the panel reports brought to the fore the relationality of scale in EU heritage policy discourse. The relevance of different scales varies in the discourse from one situation to another. For instance, sometimes ‘the global’ is emphasized, while in some instances ‘the local’ receives more attention. Since the EHL initiative concentrates on ‘European significance’, different scales are narrated in the discourse as European. At some EHL sites ‘European significance’ is attached to a spatial hierarchy of territorial scales, while at others it is formulated with non-territorial factors, such as values, political principles, or intellectual activity and exchange in scientific communities. The intertwining of scales becomes particularly visible when ‘European significance’ is narrated by describing transnational cooperation and territorial or other kind of plurality included in the history of the site. This is a way to make familiar cross-border cooperation across different times to simultaneously pave the way for present EU integration.

In the panel reports, ‘European significance’ is, indeed, produced by bringing together various elements. Elements that have been named as parts of this plurality concern territory, trade, religion, ethnicity, and language. Almost all the sites in the panel reports create an impression of a European cultural heritage as characterized by co-existence of diverse entities and spheres. For instance, *The Heart of Ancient Athens* is described as a place in which several spheres of life—artistic ideas, cultural institutions, values, political systems, and various fields of science—came together and interacted.

As the ‘European significance’ of the EHL sites is described in this way in the panel reports, what kinds of meanings and representations of Europe are thereby produced in them? In the panel reports, Europe is about values, knowledge and science, and inventing and developing political systems and political principles. Europe is thus presented as an innovative place of influential ideas and positive trajectories. In addition, the descriptions in the panel reports present Europe as a battlefield; some sites are framed as places of peace, but also war is commonly referred to (Lähdesmäki unpublished b). ‘European significance’ means unions between states at different moments in history, transnational cooperation or, more generally, something to do with the plurality of territorial or non-territorial elements. Among the selected 29 EHL sites, only three are directly about European integration, but the ‘roots’ of EU integration are pointed out at many of the sites. The emphasis on transnational encounters in the reports builds the history of Europe and the EU as a unified continuum; it creates a teleological narrative of the history of Europe and of the EU as a natural outcome of it.

### **Politics of Scale in EU Heritage Policy**

The purpose of the EHL initiative is to produce and foster heritage whose significance and meaning exceed the national scale. What kind of theoretical basis does production of a common European cultural heritage rely on? In scholarly discussion, the idea of Europe, a European identity, and European integration have been theorized with various models (e.g. Delanty 2002; Franz & Palmowski 2004; Eder 2009; Sassatelli 2015). Eder (2009) has modeled the idea of a European identity through three “stories” that construct the idea in different ways. The postnational story merges national stories into shared stories that rely on the idea of a shared European past and common cultural features; the supranational story stems from the emergence of a distinct story that is decoupled from national stories and instead emphasizes various European-level civic, economic, and political mechanisms, such as European citizenship; and the transnational story focuses on the hybridity of Europe and the diversity of its people and cultures (Eder 2009; see also Sassatelli 2015).

The construction of a European cultural heritage in EU heritage policy discourse utilizes all three of these models. In the discourse, the idea of a common European heritage transcends the national scale and thus takes a postnational antithetic stand on the traditional national narration of meanings of heritage. The EU heritage policy and initiatives themselves represent supranational mechanisms that seek to regulate and govern national-, regional-, and local-level heritage actors in the making of a European cultural heritage (Lähdesmäki, unpublished). In practice, the construction of the idea of a common European heritage occurs in the EU heritage policy by recognizing the hybridity and diversity of heritage in Europe, but, however, by narrating diversity as a starting point for the perception of unity of the European heritage. As a part of this transnational model, the EU is actively attempting to promote transnational cooperation that enhances contacts and activity between heritage actors of the EU countries.

The three stories defined by Eder (2009) explain the idea of Europe by taking a different approach to nation and ‘the national’. Indeed, nations, nation-states, and their territorial borders still form a starting point in the construction of the idea of Europe and various communal phenomena defined as European, such as a European cultural heritage. In this construction, national-scale processes, practices, and policies are either objected or adapted to the European level. In fact, the whole practice of building a European communality, feeling of belonging, and identity by fostering a common heritage is borrowed from the 19th century nation-building processes (cf. Risse 2003; Peckham 2003, Lähdesmäki 2016).

The politics of scale in EU heritage policy discourse is closely related to the EU’s identity politics. Since the core aim of the EHL initiative is “strengthening European citizens’ sense of belonging to the Union” (EC 2011, 3), the ideas, values, and topics brought to the fore in the policy rhetoric of the initiative can be perceived as core elements of the collective identity building of the EU. They also function as building blocks that the EU offers its citizens to be used in their private identification processes. Indeed, the EHL applicants are required to present in their application form a clear project of how to communicate the “European significance” of their sites to audiences. The national, regional, or local identity building potential of heritage is expected to be replaced by a European identity project in the EHL initiative. In the preparation phase of the EHL initiative, national interpretations of heritage were considered a problem to be tackled with the initiative and its emphasis on European reinterpretations of the meanings of heritage. As the Impact Assessment (2010b, 15) of the initiative argues:

The aim of the EHL was to use the potential of cultural heritage to strengthen European citizens' sense of belonging to Europe and promote a sense of European identity. [--] This leads us to a second level of the problem which is that the reading or interpretation of cultural heritage in Europe, including of the most symbolic sites of our shared heritage, is still to a very large extent a national reading. The European dimension of our common heritage is insufficiently highlighted and its potential to stimulate intercultural dialogue is insufficiently exploited.

The transnational model of a European cultural heritage emphasizes diversity as its key characteristic. The idea of diversity in EU heritage policy discourse is, however, commonly explicitly—and narrowly—defined as national and regional diversity in Europe. Thus, the idea of diversity commonly has a territorial shape in the discourse. The selection reports of the EHL sites bring out also a somewhat varied picture of diversity by referring, e.g. to multi-ethnicity, multi-religiousness, and multilingualism that may get a territorial but also a non-territorial shape.

The transnational model of heritage is closely connected to the postnational model in EU heritage policy discourse; the discourse repeatedly brings out expressions related to these two aspects in the same sentence. For example, the decision on the EHL initiative quotes the Treaty on the Functioning of the EU and explains how it “confers on the Union the task, inter alia, of contributing to the flowering of the cultures of the Member States, while respecting their national and regional diversity and at the same time bringing the common cultural heritage to the fore” (EC 2011, 1). Indeed, the ideas of diversity and unity are an inter-productive entity in EU heritage policy discourse. Fostering the diversity of cultures is expected to make them more familiar to people; create dialogue between people and cultures; enable perception of common elements among different cultures; and finally produce a sense of communality and a feeling of belonging based on the perceived common cultural elements (cf. Lähdesmäki 2012).

## Conclusions

The analysis of the policy discourse of the EHL initiative brought out how the heritage-scale relationship is extremely complex and relational. Different scalar layers merge and crisscross in the meaning-making of a European cultural heritage. This meaning-making process does not follow any simple spatial hierarchy of territories or a nested scalar system, as e.g. Ashworth (1994), Ashworth and Graham (1997), and Graham, Ashworth, and Tunbridge (2000) have suggested. The idea of a European cultural heritage is constructed in EU heritage policy discourse through various territorial and non-territorial elements whose significance in the construction process is situational and thus variable.

The most common territorial element repeated in the discourse is the national territory discussed in reference to a nation, nation-state, state, EU Member State, or country. Their plurality, interaction, and amalgamation produce in the discourse the core of a European dimension. When the discourse refers to diversity, regions and their specificities are also included in the construction process. A European cultural heritage is also signified in the discourse through a spatial micro-scale—specific sites are interpreted and explained to represent a European cultural heritage. Occasionally, the heritage is also explained as gaining its European significance by transcending the borders of Europe; heritage proves its European significance by having a global or universal importance or recognition.

In EU heritage policy discourse, a European cultural heritage is typically constructed from various non-territorial ideas, political principles, values, and phenomena that are, however, in the EHL selection reports commonly affixed to territorial entities, particularly to states and countries. The more territorial entities are involved in the manifestation of these ideas and phenomena, the more European they are explained to be. However, some of these ideas and phenomena, such as European intellectual history, scholarly achievements, and scientific views, are introduced as European without stressing any particular territorial affiliations.

EU heritage policy discourse is also formed in a relational relationship to time. The discourse introduces a European cultural heritage through various historical periods and events that are nevertheless commonly interpreted from the point of view of present day EU politics and political processes. Thus, the temporal focus of the EHL policy documents is on the present day or even the future. Indeed, the discourse repeatedly emphasizes the importance of engaging young people in fostering a European cultural heritage. This emphasis indicates one of the main political goals of the EU's heritage policy: educating a new generation of Europeans who will share a common postnational European cultural identity.

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<sup>1</sup> The labeled sites are (listed with the name of the site for which the sites themselves applied for the label and to which the label was awarded by the European Commission): Archaeological Park Carnuntum, Austria; Great Guild Hall, Estonia; Camp Westerbork, The Netherlands; Peace Palace, The Netherlands; Sites of the Peace of Westphalia, Germany; Hambach Castle, Germany; The Heart of Ancient Athens, Greece; Archive of the Crown of Aragon, Spain; Residencia de Estudiantes, Spain; Abbey of Cluny, France; Robert Schuman's House, France;

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Pan European Picnic Memorial Park, Hungary; Museo Casa Alcide De Gasperi, Italy; Kaunas of 1919–1940, Lithuania; Union of Lublin, Poland; The May 3, 1791 Constitution, Poland; The Historic Gdańsk Shipyard, Poland; General Library of the University of Coimbra, Portugal; Charter of Law of Abolition of the Death Penalty, Portugal; Franja Partisan Hospital, Slovenia; Krapina Neanderthal Site, Croatia; Olomouc Premyslid Castle and Archdiocesan Museum, Czech Republic; Sagres Promontory, Portugal; The Imperial Palace, Austria; Historic Ensemble of the University of Tartu, Estonia; Liszt Ferenc Academy of Music, Hungary; Mundaneum, Belgium; World War I Eastern Front Cemetery No. 123, Poland; and European District of Strasbourg, France. The first four sites were labeled in 2014, the next 16 in 2015, and the last 9 in 2016.