HERITAGE AND IT'S ANTHROPOLOGY

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'There is, really, no such thing as heritage,' declares Laurajane Smith,[1] one of the leading representatives of the critical trend in heritage studies. On the one hand, the origin of Smith's constructivist approach should be traced back to her studies on very varied practices which the practitioners themselves connect with heritage (Smith conducted studies both among Australian indigenous people, in museums and in monuments in Great Britain); and on the other hand to reflections on the discourse within which meanings of heritage come into being. Smith's approach is very important from the perspective of the anthropological understanding of heritage as a process, rather than a collection of things or reified ceremonies, dances or works of oral literature. Treating heritage as a collection of things (either tangible or intangible) stems from the functioning of something which Smith calls 'authorised heritage discourse' and on which institutionalised forms of heritage protection are based, including, most notably, the UNESCO World Heritage List. This approach is connected with the conviction that things which make up heritage have value which results from their participation in the past, of which they are a remnant as well as expression. This position, which Jean Davallon named substantialism,[2] continues to dominate discourse practices, which are the basis of contemporary professionalised heritage protection.

On the other hand, understanding heritage as a process, rather than a collection of things, has its origin mainly in anthropology and is connected with serious conceptual changes which occurred in the heritage discourse between 1972 (when the UNESCO Convention concerning the Protection of World Cultural and Natural Heritage was introduced) and 2003 (when the same

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[1] L. Smith, *Uses of Heritage,* London–New York 2006, p. 11.

[2] J. Davallon, *The Game of Heritagization,* [in:] *Constructing Cultural and Natural Heritage. Parks, Museums and Rural Heritage,* X. Roigé, J. Frigolé (eds), Girona 2010, pp. 39–62.

organisation adopted the Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage).[3] The basis for the 1972 Convention was the category of historic monument – which has a Western and modern genesis – universalised, despite its ethnocentricity, to cover entire World Cultural Heritage.[4] As a result of re-evaluations in Western philosophy and theory of science (which resulted mainly from becoming aware of the hermeneutic (temporal and spatial) placement of each human perspective, including the scientific one) as well as a crisis of representation (which stimulated these re-evaluations), a pluralism of discourses about the past was accepted. As a consequence of the related criticism of the scientific understanding of history as knowledge about the past on the one hand, and on the other hand the necessity (emerging in the practice of implementing the 1972 Convention) to include ontology and value systems different from those behind such an understanding, the understanding of the object of protection changed from 'monument' to 'tradition' i.e. from object to process. The point was not to understand heritage as a collection of things but as an attitude towards the past, which also includes the approach to things, consisting in getting them involved in the process of cultural production. Heritage is a materialisation of the Western attitude towards the past rather than its testimony, although as a testimony of the past it is constructed within the authorised heritage discourse. In this understanding, the category of monument (and its consequences) would be the heritage of the modern West, rather than a carrier of universal values.

The American anthropologist Barbara Kirshenblatt-Gimblett defines heritage as 'a mode of cultural production that has recourse to the past and produces something new'.[5] In this definition, apart from understanding heritage as a process (since production is a process), what is important is the character of the relation between the past and the future: heritage 'has recourse to the past and produces something new'. Therefore, the relation between the past and the present, within which the process of cultural production takes place, is *recourse*: the present has recourse to the past in order to process it. Such a relation is a complete reversal of the position postulated by scientific history. As Hans-Georg Gadamer wrote in *Truth and Method*, history, dealing with the past,

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[3] More on the subject in: E. Klekot, *Konwencja UNESCO w sprawie ochrony niematerialnego dziedzictwa kulturowego: archeologia pojęć*, „Ochrona Zabytków" 1/ 2014, pp. 31−40.

[4] Cf.: L. Smith, *Uses…* ; E. Klekot, *Polityczny wymiar dziedzictwa kultury*, [in:] G. Michałowska, J. Nakonieczna, H. Schreiber (eds), *Kultura w stosunkach międzynarodowych*, vol. 2, *Pułapki kultury*, Warszawa 2014, pp. 46−62.

[5] B. Kirshenblatt-Gimblett, *From Ethnology to Heritage. The role of the Musesum.* „Etnografia Nowa" 2011 (3), p. 126.

perforce cannot be based on repeated experimentation postulated by science; it can, however, aspire to the empirical ideal, introducing the concept of historical research, which, formulating criteria of scientific objectivity, creates an insurmountable distance from the object of research. Gadamer connects the introduction of the concept of historical research in the scientific sense of the term with the position named historicism.[6] Historicism was based on the conviction that through historical research constructed like a scientific experiment, i.e. based on inductive conclusions on the basis of testimonies of the past, called 'sources', one can represent the past 'exactly as it was', and historians should strive to be unbiased in their descriptions of 'the past as a foreign country'.[7] With the development of historicism in the 19th-century, whose empirical approach was certainly not devoid of philosophical assumptions, including the fact that it attempted to implement the programme of rational scepticism, the theory led to a brilliant career of the concept of 'historical context', whose relativist sovereignty caused the spectre of anachronism to hover over modern historiography. As a consequence, this led to questioning the possibility of formulating universal statements on the basis of historical research as not set in any historical context. In this way, according to Gadamer,[8] the rational universalism of the Age of Enlightenment fell from its own sword in the clash with the past, and historicism, which connected interest in the past with striving to establish a scientific method of examining history, has led to the situation where modern man was unable to *have recourse to* the past in order to make some sort of use of it for himself.

There is the danger of instrumentalisation in *having recourse to* the past and in getting the past involved in the creation of 'something new'. It is this danger that David Lowenthal, the British historian of American origin, warns about. For him, heritage is history's bastard brother: while history pursues a 'noble aim', that is 'meticulous objectivity' in representing the past, heritage is not only guilty of distorting history, but in fact 'its function is to do just that'.[9] However, the relation of *having recourse to*, established by heritage, can also be understood outside of the Manichean division, proposed by Lowenthal, into heritage which instrumentally appropriates and history which maintains an objectifying distance, safe for both sides. It can be understood as hermeneutic *Aneignung* (*appropriation*), which can be both appropriation and assimilation – a necessary require-

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[6] G. Gadamer, *Prawda i metoda*, transl. B. Baran, Kraków 1993, pp. 209−216.

[7] The citations in quotation marks are *loci communes* of methodological discussion of contemporary historians: Leopold von Rakne is the author of the first one, and David Lowenthal of the other.

[8] G. Gadamer, *Prawda…*, pp. 264−265.

[9] D. Lowenthal, *The Heritage Crusade and the Spoils of History*, Cambridge 1998, p. 106.

ment of authentic interpretation leading to understanding.[10] Anthropologist Arnd Schneider proposes applying this category to cultural analysis; in his opinion 'arguably, in a more general sense most cultural practice is appropriation',[11] since it is the assimilation of otherness and it means that the appropriator 'is changing oneself as a result of interpreting the other's artefact (or any other cultural manifestation).[12] From the hermeneutic perspective, it is of utmost importance that 'appropriation' is connected with 'understanding' or 'grasping' the appropriated by the appropriator. At the same time, Schneider points out, because the act of appropriation is an exchange, inequality is also inherent to it, which can lead to the situation where, from the point of view of the other, it becomes not appropriation but expropriation and leads to alienation.[13] A lot has been written about this effect of musealisation, especially in the context of the so-called primitive art and ethnographic museum collections.[14] However, a little later the same authors showed in different publications how heritagisation can open the door for the 'expropriated' to appropriate the museum which had alienated them, and which becomes a space of emancipation for them.[15]

The articles presented in this volume concern various aspects of the process of heritagisation. In Poland the impulse to undertake critical anthropological reflection on heritage was the ratification in 2011 of the UNESCO Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage, adopted by this organisation in 2003. Julia Włodarczyk's article is devoted to Polish attempts at complying with this convention; she worked on these issues as an employee of the National Heritage Board of Poland. The 2003 Convention, which was created with the active participation of anthropologists, reflects the changes which occurred in the discourse about the values of the past during the last five decades. The differences between the 1972 Convention concerning the Protection of World Cultural and Natural Heritage and the 2003 Convention reflect the former one's struggles with ethnocentrism, stemming from the political and

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[10]   Ricoeur in: A. Schneider, *Appropriation as Practice: Art and Identity in Argentina,* New York 2006, p. 26.

[11]   Ibid., p. 22.

[12]   Ibid., p. 26.

[13]   Ibid., pp. 25−30.

[14]   Cf., for instance, J. Clifford, *Kłopoty z kulturą,* transl. E. Dżurak et al., Warszawa 2000; B. Kirshenblatt-Gimblett, *Objects of Ethnography,* [in:] B. Kirshenblatt-Gimblett, *Destination Culture,* Berkeley−Los Angeles 1998 [Polish translation of fragment: B. Kirshenblatt-Gimblett, *Przedmioty etnografii,* transl. E. Klekot, „Zbiór Wiadomości do Antropologii Muzealnej”, 2016, no 3 , pp. 29–46.]; I. Karp, S.D. Lavine (eds), *Exhibiting Cultures: The Poetics and Politics of Museum Display,* Washington−London 1991.

[15]   J. Clifford, *Returns: Becoming Indigenous in the Twenty-First Century,* Cambridge, Mass., London 2013; B. Kirshenblatt-Gimblett, *From Ethnology…*

cultural domination of the West.[16] The uneven distribution of entries in the World Heritage List confirms the theory about the ethnocentricity of the criteria formulated in 1972 as universal ones. For this reason, the Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage, affirming multi-cultur-alism, radically changed the method of evaluating phenomena. The measure of the value of a specific heritage manifestation is no longer a set of criteria external to the culture which produced it, which aspires to universalism, but its significance from the perspective of the community which produced it and its vitality.

Dorota Majkowska-Szajer and Maria Małanicz-Przybylska wrote articles about issues related to intangible heritage; they are both based on many years of ethnographic research into family rituals (Majkowska-Szajer) and musical folklore (Małanicz-Przybylska). These very traditional topics, set in folklore tradition, were treated in a completely untraditional manner by the authors. Maria Małanicz-Przybylska proposes a critical analysis of highlander folk music as creating an identity by means of cultural production. In this interpretation, the musical folklore of the Polish Podhale region is probably closest to Hobswamian invented tradition, whose products enter the circulation of Matthews' cultural supermarket, participating in the construction of late-modern localities. Dorota Majkowska-Szajer, on the other hand, reflects on the late-modern need for tra-dition as an element of culturally constructed experience. In her diagnosis, this need is connected with nostalgia generated by modernisation. Most descriptions of modernisation as a human experience emphasise the fast pace and radical nature of changes. Marx' saying 'All that is solid melts into air' is a description of modernisation from almost 175 years ago, which still remains relevant today. Confronted with such an experience, contemporary man describes, using the term *tradition*, his need to control the element of change, which entails a sense of loss. However, in order for tradition to truly control the element of modern change, this loss needs to be named and recovered from; the emptiness it leaves in its wake needs to be examined and tradition should be built only from the level of this emptiness. Tradition is not a guarantee of continuity *per se*, but it is an openness to the possibility of creating con-tinuity despite breakup and loss. It is not a thing we reach for in order to 'have the sense of being rooted' – it is work and time required for putting down roots, not necessarily in a particular place, as this plant metaphor would suggest. Nomads have traditions as well. Roots are, rather, a metaphor of reaching deep inside. The depth of emptiness after a loss should be the depth

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[16]   E. Klekot, *Konwencja UNESCO…*

of the roots on which tradition will be founded. Tradition is understanding change, not negating it.

The performative nature of heritage, understood as the process of generating meanings in the course of cultural practice, connects it inextricably to remembering and forgetting. In Katarzyna Puzon's text on the urban heritage of Beirut, memory and heritage are closely connected and we could even say, to quote Tim Benton, that 'heritage turns out to be what people remember as significant'.[17] In Poland collective remembering and forgetting are materialised in Jewish cemeteries. Their heritagisation is a process fraught with difficulties which are a remnant of the social revolution which Poles dreamed through, one of the bloody foundations of which was the Holocaust.[18] The concept of heritage became a political one when it started to mean 'cultural heritage', i.e. in 1794, when Abbé Grégoire used the term *un héritage commun* ('common heritage') to refer to the set of 'cultural treasures' to which a community earns a right legitimised by the 'sweat of the people' at the cost of private property.[19] From that time heritage has been inextricably linked with the issues of property and political community, which are key to political order. The situation of a traumatic past and violence shapes the politics of remembering and forgetting in a specific way and, as the Estonian ethnologist Kristin Kuutma writes, 'the relationship between community and heritage need not always be good and comfortable. Communities are not homogeneous and neither is their heritage; disjunctions occur and heritage claims may not be consensual'.[20] Taking care of monuments of the past is the foundation of the authorised heritage discourse, whose creator and exponent are the modern middle class and its state; taking care of the graves of one's deceased ones and neglecting or showing enmity towards the graves of others are behaviours transgressing modernity, which aspires to universalism. Alicja Mroczkowska writes about their co-occurrence in the article about the Jewish cemetery in Sobienie-Jeziory, while in her article, Magdalena Socha writes about the geopolitical entanglements of heritage and the politics of memory about loss, devoted to 'museums of the fatherland' in the Polish and German context. Things of the past, after undergoing musealisation, are always set in the current geopolitics, becoming a part of the identity imaginary.

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[17] T. Benton, *Introduction*, [in:] T. Benton (ed.), *Understanding Heritage and Memory*, Manchester 2010, p. 1.

[18] A. Leder, *Prześniona rewolucja. Ćwiczenie z logiki historycznej*, Warszawa 2014.

[19] D. Gillman, *The Idea of Cultural Heritage*, Cambridge 2010, p. 84.

[20] K. Kuutma, *Between Arbitration and Engineering: Concepts and Contingencies in the Shaping of Heritage Regimes,* [in:] *Heritage Regimes and the State*, R. Bendix, A. Eggert, A. Peselmann (eds), Gottingen 2012, p. 27.

Heritage's complicated relations with the institution of museum and with collection as a method of organising reality are analysed by Hubert Czachowski, an anthropologist and long-time Director of the Ethnographic Museum in Toruń. He writes about the important and always current problem of representation and representativeness, which a museum collection faces. 'The notion of knowledge as accurate representation (…) needs to be abandoned,'[21] wrote Richard Rorty in his book *Philosophy and the Mirror of Nature*, published in 1979. The crisis of representation is connected with asking questions about procedures which reality was subjected to in order to obtain its representation. Museums, collections and heritage are sets of such procedures, and the verification of the representations they generate is based on the criterion of authenticity, which is also created by society as one of the most important modern values. The article of Jagna Jaworowska, devoted to the reconstruction of the castle at Tykocin, is an interesting take on these issues. The author employs the actor-network theory to explain the manner of functioning of reconstruction as consisting of material reality, which is supposed to be an 'authentic representation of the past.'

Heritage is an extremely important element of the modern construction of time. It satisfies the need for continuity, constantly frustrated by modernity, which is necessary for the process of creating an identity both on the individual and collective level. What we call heritage is equally the consequence or material trace of the activity of those who are officially regarded as its creators as it is the consequence of the discursive practices of a historian, art historian, archaeologist, folklorist, or ethnographer. A critical approach enables us to see the emancipatory potential of heritage, as well as the consequences of its instrumentalisation, both through its commodification, which turns heritage into economic resources, used mainly in the leisure sector, and in the form of political identities. It is the task of anthropological studies on heritage to follow practices, value systems, and motivations of various social actors entangled in the process of creating heritage. The authors of the articles in this volume of the Anthropology of History Yearbook endeavour to accomplish this task.

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[21]   R. Rorty, *Filozofia jako zwierciadło natury,* transl. M. Szczubiałka, Warszawa 1994, p. 11.