The Strength of Weak Heritages: Urbanity, Utopias and the Commitment to Intangible Heritage

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Abstract	Rautenberg casts his discussion in the current context of strong heritage policies and local passions and interests, which he calls 'weak heritages' because of their very low level of institutionalisation. He examines two ethnographies: Villeurbanne, a town near Lyon that has traditionally hosted refugee and migrant associations, and Villeneuve d'Ascq, in the north of France, where pioneers' utopia of country town was established in the 1970s. In both cases, in opposition to official policies, 'weak' local heritage has succeeded in preserving local practices and parts of landscapes to which people are attached. Both cases involve what Rautenberg calls 'social heritage', whose strength, he argues, lies in their plasticity. They do not belong to anybody, can appeal to a range of new social arenas and make people feel that they are the inheritors of a history.

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CHAPTER 17 1

The Strength of Weak Heritages: Urbanity, Utopias and the Commitment to Intangible Heritage

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INTRODUCTION 6

Anthropologists and, more broadly, all of the social sciences have renewed their 7
interest in reflecting on the concepts of heritage and of community, ever since 8
international organizations such as the United Nations Educational, Scientific 9
and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) and the Council of Europe began pro- 10
moting them, linking the two concepts to each other (Labadi 2013), for the 11
purpose of hastening the processes of democratization among the various 12
countries of the world and also within each country (Adell et al. 2015), as well 13
as encouraging the sustainability of individual regions (Auclair and Fairclough 14
2015). One of the nodal points of these new policies is the emphasis placed on 15
proximity in heritage practices, which results, within cities, in a renewed inter- 16
est in neighbourhoods (Morell and Franquesa 2011) and in the furthering of 17
the idea of a 'community of practices' (Adell et al. 2015). A community of 18
practices is built on the model of communities of learners, developed by 19
Etienne Wenger (1998), who argues that individuals from a variety of back- 20
grounds and with different interests can work together effectively as long as 21
they share a goal and manage their negotiations jointly. The idea that, more or 22
less explicitly, underlies these policies is that heritage carries with it a liberating 23
power. This idea that was developed, among others, by the Council of Europe 24
Framework Convention on the Value of Cultural Heritage for Society, signed 25

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26 in 2005.[1] In other words, there is a potential direction that heritage could take
27 that passes through empowerment. However, it is important to remember that
28 the concept of empowerment is as ambiguous as it is rich. It is backed by starkly
29 differing policies and ideologies, from the neoliberal views that were developed
30 in Margaret Thatcher's Great Britain, for example (Dicks 2000), to the radical
31 standpoints of postcolonial studies (Bacqué and Biewener 2013). Thus the
32 heritagization of neighbourly customs and networks, which constitute both a
33 practice and a fundamental value of urbanity, connects old and new residents,
34 the development of tourism, and the protection and maintenance of the quality
35 of life, international political processes and the management of localism,
36 depending on the various political stakes, which may be in conflict with each
37 other (Morell 2015). The heritagization of this urbanity, which has become a
38 major issue in urban practices and politics (Rautenberg 2015a), creates new
39 urban territories and reorganizes living environments, as Morell (2015) has
40 clearly shown for Palma de Mallorca.

41 While emphasizing that location in public action is a governance style that
42 makes very good use of heritage, it would be a mistake to reduce all heritage
43 action to localism. Palma de Mallorca is a very good example of urban public
44 policies and individual issues of gentrification coming together to contribute to
45 the heritagization of several of the city's formerly industrial and working-class
46 districts. Heritage can also be a driver for the mobilization of residents, citizens
47 and anyone else who might be working for a particular cause. Thus we will see
48 that in Villeneuve d'Ascq, a new French city, the memory of utopias that is built
49 into the city's origins and still contributes to its current urbanity can be mobi-
50 lized under certain circumstances—for instance, as a way to fight against changes
51 that the residents consider harmful. This is a kind of heritage that we will call
52 'weak' because it has not gone through any of the instances or procedures of
53 heritage institutionalization, such as the Council of Europe's not very formal-
54 ized recognition. Looking at another situation, the 50th anniversary celebration
55 of a cultural association that is engaged in intercultural activities in the region of
56 Lyon, I highlight another kind of 'weak' heritage, which in this case is made up
57 of the values that the group has stood for from its beginnings. I then propose
58 that these forms of heritage end up becoming intermingled with the process
59 that brings them to light—in other words, it is in the actions of the residents
60 rather than in preservation by the institutions where heritagization resides.

RESIDENTIAL ENGAGEMENT IN 'WEAK' OR NON-INSTITUTIONAL FORMS OF URBAN HERITAGE

63 The heritage field has grown considerably in recent decades, especially since   AU2
64 UNESCO ratified the 2003 Convention for the Safeguarding of Intangible
65 Cultural Heritage (Smith and Akagawa 2009). This has resulted in heightened
66 tension between the two main forms of heritage: heritage that is called 'fixed'
67 in the past and in a territory, in particular that of monuments or archaeological

remains; and a 'more mutable heritage centred very much on the present' (Smith and Akagawa 2009, 2). Heritage is no longer a noteworthy exception in our environment; it belongs to our daily landscape. It has become one of the chief tools for sustainable development policies, especially in our cities, where it is connected with social cohesion and citizen involvement (Auclair and Fairclough 2015). It is also involved in the mobilization of residents against political projects or development projects—private or state run—that threaten to change valued lifestyles or places (Hocquet 2013). This heritage boom has therefore forced local and national officialdom to reassess its basic assumptions and take note of popular movements and grassroots heritage practices, like those arising from neighbourhood networks and not always aligned with public policies or the interests of economic actors. People cherish this collection of practices and lasting bonds with their environment and are willing to mobilize for its distribution and protection. This is what I am calling 'weak heritage'. These are not objects, buildings or places that connect us to 'our' city but ideas, images, values and social relations that are part of our urbanity and that we would like to sustain (Rautenberg 2015a), although they may eventually be embodied in physical locations. I hope that the reader will forgive my bit of humour in calling this heritage 'weak', not to evoke its fragility but to emphasize how weakly institutionalized it is, as suggested in Granovetter's well-known text (1983). Spread by people who do not know each other very well or even at all, move in different social orbits and live in different neighbourhoods or towns, these 'weak' heritages mainly mobilize people who are in a position to widen the circle of those who might feel implicated, which gives an unexpected extra reach to this kind of heritage. On the one hand, this kind of citizen mobilization often goes through 'heritage communities of practice'— proposed by new heritage policies and promoted by the Council of Europe, these are intended to both manage and protect the transmission of the heritage under their responsibility. The states that make up UNESCO, on the other hand, continue to promote heritage that upholds their national unity (Adell et al. 2015). UNESCO, supported by non-governmental organizations and citizens' groups, especially those involved in protecting indigenous people, also places great importance on participation, recycling the strategies of the emancipation pedagogy of the 1970s and connecting them to the rediscovery of localism, to which heritage is presumed to give new value, as it does to the defence of cultural rights. This approach, in an almost counter-hegemonic way, attempts to protect communities, while the international organization, along with the vast majority of the states that constitute it, promotes a neoliberal ideological model of conservation, encouraging the commodification of heritage. Although they were not particularly concerned by that model at first, communities of practice have become increasingly important within urban heritage as the intangible cultural heritage concept has fostered a wide-scale embrace of urban spaces by urban residents, far beyond what is recognized by UNESCO. However, these alternative, non-institutional heritagization processes have to find a place within urban renewal policies that have other goals.

113   During the 'entrepreneurial turn' of the 1980s (Harvey 1989), European
114 cities developed new governmental models favouring the 'project' over older
115 bureaucratic models (Le Galès 2003), while capitalism was being transformed
116 and the citizenry was demanding greater involvement in managing its daily
117 environment. Citizens, concerned with protecting their quality of life, became
118 more heavily invested in culture and heritage, traditionally the domain of pub-
119 lic policies. Neighbourhoods became the subject of renewed governmental
120 concern. They went from being territories defined above all by residential
121 involvement and the spatial organization of the city to being political issues,
122 mired in new forms of governance that were trying to reconcile governmental
123 decisions with popular opinion. The neighbourhood found itself 'encapsu-
124 lated' in the vertical structure of public policies, to the advantage of certain
125 entrepreneurs, 'snakes' who know how to climb the 'ladders' of power through
126 their favourable positions within the networks (Morell and Franquesa 2011).
127 The neighbourhood played an important role in idealizing proximity, leading
128 to a proliferation of governmental projects to conserve and protect the cultural
129 landscape (Bandarin and Van Oers 2014), localism (Morell 2015) and the mul-
130 ticultural environment (Salzbrunn 2015). Increasingly, urban regeneration
131 policies work with the population, as a collection of 'communities' of residents
132 that take responsibility for the transformation of their neighbourhoods for the
133 European Union and as 'heritage communities' carrying out the actions neces-
134 sary for the preservation of their unique identities for UNESCO (Morell and
135 Franquesa 2011, 199–201). The real issues behind heritage and neighbour-
136 hood are the decentralization of public decision-making, taking it closer to the
137 residents, and the revival of the real-estate market. Morell (2015) shows the
138 contradiction between these two issues.

139   This analysis shows that we must find a way to connect the preservation of
140 the living environment, the evolutions in local governance and capitalism's
141 double turning point—entrepreneurial and cultural—to all of which cities must
142 adapt. Are all cities equally affected by this imperative towards communication
143 and urban marketing? Does this phenomenon erase all other forms of urban
144 lifestyle preservation? For tourism-driven Palma de Mallorca, Morell and
145 Franquesa show that residents were able to assert other heritage forms and
146 practices. Isnart (2015) shows how on the Island of Rhodes, also strongly
147 marked by its medieval past, alternative heritage forms were able to surface in
148 the process of defending a Catholic religious heritage for its own sake, uncon-
149 nected to the Crusade-tourism sightseeing circuits. The fashion for urban mar-
150 keting hides the more complex heritagization practices that residents engage in
151 for causes other than promoting their city or economy.

152   The two ethnographic cases on which I will now focus illustrate the 'weak'
153 form of heritage mentioned earlier. In both cases, it is the commitment to a
154 cause, expressed through specific, regular actions, that breathes life back into
155 the heritage. This kind of heritage is flexible, with contours defined through
156 action and storytelling rather than governmental protection and policies, and
157 it evokes a kind of 'heritage conscience … circumscribed in experience', a

'feeling of the past' (Tornatore 2006, 526), rather than the groups of buildings   158
or objects of which inventories are made. This kind of heritage belongs to no   159
one, except for the heritage communities of practice, whose boundaries change   160
from one event to the next.   161

Villeneuve d'Ascq: 'Weak' Heritage Forms of an Urban   162
Utopia   163

Villeneuve d'Ascq is located in the suburbs of Lille in northern France. The   164
expansion of this city is rooted in the urban utopias of the 1960s that followed   165
the modernist movement (Rautenberg 2015b). In some neighbourhoods, the   166
city illustrates the utopia of a 'country town' and of a more democratic opera-   167
tion, allowing for a variety of mechanisms for local democracy.[2] The research we   168
did there from 2003 to 2006 shows that the first residents, who considered   169
themselves 'pioneers', aimed to protect their immediate environments and the   170
cooperative practices to which they were particularly attached, and which some   171
of the newer residents were able to revive. Between the late 1960s and the early   172
1980s, the developers, architects and urban planners who designed and built   173
the city wanted to give it an identity in line with the modernity of the time: 174
green spaces, sporting facilities, cultural sites, support for new-technology com-   175
panies and participatory democracy; a mix of individual and collective housing,   176
of home ownership and subsidized housing. This period fell between the end of   177
urban design's heyday, under the stewardship of governmental bridge and high-   178
way engineers and public works departments, and the beginnings of 'functional   179
urban planning', which drew inspiration from the May 1968 movement and for   180
which the new cities were the favourite field of operation. However, the propos-   181
als of the state's urban development department in charge of the project show   182
some difficulty in seriously considering the territory's existing social and politi-   183
cal realities as anything other than constraints (elected officials and residents   184
were accused of hindering the functioning of the project) or as resources   185
(strengthening the sense of a 'natural setting' that was desirable for the new city,   186
just like the old farmsteads). One gets the impression that the planners would   187
have preferred to have built on a vacuum. The 12,000 people who lived in the   188
area before the city was created are only mentioned in passing in contemporary   189
speeches and local newspaper reports. They continue to stay in the shadows in   190
the following decades. At the same time, there are many speeches about the   191
participation of the 'residents', betraying a real concern, on the part of both the   192
urban development technicians and planners and the new city's elected officials,   193
about building a city that was supposed to be more 'democratic'.   194

In many ways, Villeneuve d'Ascq looks like the realization of a utopia. It   195
approximates the tripartite structure of Thomas More's *Utopia* (Choay 1965).   196
First, it critiques what it supplants (here, functionalism and the housing proj-   197
ects that supposedly dehumanized the city). Second, its project is to create a   198
more harmonious society (i.e. the city). Third, it conceives the built-up space   199
as a bridge between city and nature, founded on more democratic institutions   200

201 with the goal of 'changing the city'—in other words, a space that moves away
202 from the old urban age to a new urban age. This desire is not new; it has been
203 part of the development of most new French cities. Even now, more than
204 40 years later, these utopian ideas are not forgotten by long-time residents, the
205 city's architects and certain elected officials. They have become part of a kind
206 of intangible cultural heritage which is still sometimes embodied in city plan-
207 ning to this day. Let us expand a little on these three main utopian ideas.

208 The first utopia is rather intangible. It involved creating an urban life that
209 was different from the rejected urban past of large apartment buildings and the
210 'spectre of bedroom communities' (Vadelorge 2003). We call this utopia 'the
211 opening'. It can be seen as a local paradigm shared by both those who con-
212 ceived it and many residents. It is visible in architectural choices and social
213 practices, as many pioneers from the 'golden age' of the first years remember.
214 This idea is what gives coherence to the project of the new city, unifying the
215 built-up space and the social, the practices and the dreams. It explains the pro-
216 hibition on closing off gardens with tall hedges so that interactions can take
217 place, the choice of certain homeowners not to fence off their property, and the
218 presence of public paths that snake between the houses. But it can also be seen
219 in the welcome given to Chilean and Vietnamese refugees during the 1970s
220 and the decisions to devote 50% of the housing stock to affordable or subsi-
221 dized housing and to give priority to innovative companies. In other words,
222 Villeneuve d'Ascq was supposed to be an open city, promoting social progress,
223 in which the quality of the social relations was supposed to be the key to
224 'changing the world'.

225 The second idea has to do with the promotion of local democracy, built on
226 a system of meetings, which was promoted by the government's planning
227 department in order to exchange information between the population and the
228 professionals. Here the technicians present their projects to the population,
229 including the long-time residents of the three municipalities and the first resi-
230 dents of the new neighbourhoods. The atmosphere can become tense when
231 the residents believe that their points of view are not being heard. Later, other
232 systems were set up to allow organizations, elected officials and residents to   AU3
233 work together on issues of interest to them all, including the management of
234 public facilities, the establishment of day-to-day ecological routines, building
235 permits, investment projects and the organization of neighbourhood parties.
236 However, these systems eventually failed.

237 The third utopian idea is that of mixing city and countryside, following the
238 old and well-known dream, or more specifically bringing nature into the city,
239 consciously rebutting modernist functionalism. This explains the importance
240 given to green spaces, private gardens and the greening of public spaces, now
241 seen as recreational spaces, not simply sites of pleasure, as they often were in
242 older French cities. The last farming operations are also preserved, treated as
243 almost sacred and more as heritage sites than anything else.

From Urban Utopias to the 'Imaginary in Act' of Local Residents

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In the statements we collected from our interviews, many architects, planners, leftist elected officials, and old and new residents appeared to share the utopias of the time and a vaguely communitarian ideal of life. A sort of common vision, a spirit of sharing, emerged. This generation, which a decade earlier had experienced the events of May 1968 (some from very close up), with its demonstrations and occupying of universities, had not lost its illusions of a better world. The people who arrived in the new city were hoping for a friendlier, less conventional way of life. They wanted to build an ideal city, to forge amicable social connections, to carry out collective actions, to show solidarity. These new residents of Villeneuve were heavily invested in community life. They were carrying the torch for what appeared, then, to be modernity, and it seemed as though the new city was going to make it possible for these projects to blossom. Some of the pioneers, who in the past had had positions of responsibility in trade unions, politics, or community clubs and groups, took the lead when it became necessary to defend special interests that turned into collective claims. They became engaged in developing neighbourhood activities or in joint proprietor associations. From the beginning, the new city allowed, and even encouraged, the development of individual plans and ambitions.

These social imaginaries occurred within the context of the city's profound and long-lasting transformation, which followed the serious transformation of European cities that began in the 1950s with the 'democratization of space' that governments were trying to promote (Secchi 2004). However, as the example of Villeneuve d'Ascq shows, residents were able to resist these institutional frameworks. The organizations that had been intended as a way to manage the subdivisions became more demanding than expected or desired. Sometimes they turned into powerful local opposition groups against public officials. It turns out that when projects that have been imagined and designed in architectural firms and urban planning offices are realized and carried out, there are sometimes surprises in store as participatory utopia extends into social life.

The various agents involved in new cities often took charge of the narrative of their origins and their history very early on (Vadelorge 2003). Thus Villeneuve d'Ascq's political and democratic identity relies on sagas that emphasize the state's heavy-handed approach to its beginnings. They can be categorized as founding narratives, falling somewhere between mythology and history. They were echoed by a number of our interviewees and we found them again in various publications to do with the city, in the local press, in biographies and in historical works. These founding narratives can be structured into three major interrelated themes.

The first is that of a technocratic adventure that causes the city to emerge from the ground almost by magic. The best-known story, which exists in several different versions, is that of 'one of General de Gaulle's ministers'—that is, Edgar Pisani, the minister of public Works from 1966 to 1967—who, like a

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demiurge, is supposed to have flown over the site in a plane or a helicopter in order to decide on the placement of the city.

The second recurring theme involves the pioneers who went into battle against everyone—government authorities, developers and the urban community—to ensure that the city would live up to their residential dreams. Thus we find stories about protests 'against the defects' that people discovered in the apartments when they were first moving in; about the public authority's management of transportation routes in the subdivisions; about the opposition to the construction of the Alvaredo neighbourhood[3]; and about Gérard Caudron's first election, in 1977, when he ran on the platform of recalibrating the city's development plans, which he said had 'fallen into the hands of the technocrats'.[4]

The third theme is one that comes up most often; it is that of the lost solidarity of the early years, when neighbours helped each other, bought lawn mowers together and used them in common, welcomed new arrivals with a shared drink, and organized big midsummer bonfires on the plain in front of the castle.

Nowadays, these narratives run together to make up an activist myth for the city, one of the pillars of Villeneuve's social imaginary, along with its heritagist, urbanist and landscapist elements. The importance of the urban landscape, which has managed to combine some of the typical traits of northern France's urban culture with architectural modernity, should not be underestimated. The residents of Villeneuve are attached to the position of nature in their environment, to the passages and alleyways between the houses and to the little gardens that they tend in front of their dwellings, even when they are part of the communal property. One of the pleasures often mentioned is walking in the city, running or taking walks around the lakes. When asked why they decided to move here, many residents mention nature, the sense of an urban village, the city's 'openness to nature and the countryside.' Many of those we talked to were unaware that the lakes and ponds that can be found all over the city were actually created at the same time as the new city. In the area around the castle, where the kind of collective struggles that we have quickly described here never really took place, the local government recently revived the midsummer bonfires in celebration of Saint John that were initiated about 30 years ago by local parents and other residents.

The original values that were in place when the city was created are still partially present in the mental image that people have of the city, although the residents' practices have changed quite a bit and the old values have now largely been overlaid with more 'classical' images of heritage. According to some of the witnesses, since 1974, public spaces have become closed off. Residents have 'forgotten' to trim their hedges, thus impeding the kind of communication that can happen over the backyard hedge and, even more, the visibility of their yards and gardens from the outside. The ownership association regulations have been modified to allow yards to be closed off. 'People are barricading themselves in', we heard during our interviews. A number of public pathways

have been privatized. At the same time, mutually supportive relationships 333
within neighbourhoods are no longer what they were. Finally, a reading of 334
local newspapers and community newsletters indicates that Villeneuve's heri- 335
tage has been the object of veritable institutional invention, as there is an insis- 336
tence on emphasizing the least little vestige that might anchor the new city in 337
old, or even ancient, soil. 338

If we only had institutional memory to go by, we might think that Villeneuve 339
d'Ascq was a city like any other, whose history was rooted in the soil of north- 340
ern France, in spite of the memories of some people and the practices of others. 341
Ten years ago, the heritage of new cities was no respecter of utopias. And yet, 342
what could look like a denial of collective memory continued to play its own 343
part: however embellished or transformed they might be, the stories of the 344
founding of the city and of some of the small events that dotted the history of 345
its neighbourhoods had not been forgotten by the city's residents. They reac- 346
tivated those memories whenever it came to recalling that the utopias of the 347
past had not been erased, even if they were now more likely to fall into a private 348
register or to have to do with neighbourhood socialization. This kind of mem- 349
ory was also mobilized for the sake of demanding that the public spaces be 350
managed in a way that was more respectful of nature and to revive the manifes- 351
tations and practices of neighbourliness. At the time when we were carrying 352
out our research, these utopias were also invoked to argue against the construc- 353
tion of a large stadium on public territory, or to save a tree that was interfering 354
with the flow of traffic from being cut down. They also appeared in the mayor's 355
campaign speeches, when he reminded the city's inhabitants of how he resisted 356
the government and its technocrats when he was first elected in 1977. 357

In this way, urban utopia seems to fit well with the social heritage of the city. 358
Such 'social' heritage retains a real force, as well as a greater political and social 359
efficacy than many of the city's more iconic heritage sites, such as the Flers 360
'castle', which is registered on the supplementary historic monument list. The 361
following example, however, is based on a different kind of experience. It has 362
to do with the treatment of interculturalism in a cultural organization. This is 363
less about urbanity as space than it is about urbanity as a capacity of the city's 364
residents—who associate the management of cultural otherness with lifestyles, 365
knowledge, and practical and interpersonal skills—that constitutes an impor- 366
tant part of the city's heritage. 367

From a 'Community of Experiences' to a 'Heritage Community of Practice': Villeurbanne's Ecumenical Cultural Centre

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The Jean-Pierre Lachaize Ecumenical Cultural Centre (Centre Culturel 371
Œcuménique, CCO) in the town of Villeurbanne, near Lyon, was established 372
in the 1960s as a meeting place for students of the nearby university. Since the 373
beginning, the CCO was involved, on the one hand, in the social work of the 374

375 district and in creating a network of social support there and, on the other
376 hand, in helping immigrants, addressing political issues to do with relations
377 between Europe and the third world, and providing support to refugees. When
378 the centre celebrated its 50th anniversary, something about the activities of its
379 membership that had never actually been made explicit finally became quite
380 clear: their ongoing commitment, from the very beginning, to a principled
381 sense of hospitality and to what we might today call the defence of cultural
382 rights (Autant-Dorier and Aubry 2014).[5] When the 'Cultural Centre for
383 Chaplaincies and for Catholic and Protestant Services' was created by Father
384 Jean Latreille in 1963,[6] it was mainly intended as a way to provide chaplaincy
385 services to the students of the nearby university. Very quickly, starting with the
386 centre's 1967 handbook, the students who used it were asked to be truly
387 engaged and not to arrive with a 'consumer mentality' (quoted in Chatelan
388 2012). However, in 1971, Latreille noted that 'the term "welcome centre"
389 would have been just as apt. Because it is a real caravansary. You can find every-
390 thing there, the best and the not so good, prayers and folk dances, catechism
391 circles and card games, a real bistro during the week and a parish on Sundays'
392 (quoted in Chatelan 2012, 21). The cultural centre had made itself open to the
393 neighbourhood, but to some degree that was done to the detriment of its evan-
394 gelical work and of the pastoral care of the students. Nevertheless, as the 1970s
395 went on, the centre expanded, received new sources of funding from the town
396 of Villeurbanne and in 1976 changed its name to the Ecumenical Cultural
397 Centre, providing cultural events for the neighbourhood as well as chaplaincy
398 services. The CCO does not intend to be just a place that 'rents out venues'
399 but rather to remain a 'place of freedom, welcome and a meeting place for all
400 those who work towards promoting humanity' (Chatelan 2012, 26). The cen-
401 tre makes itself available for training workshops and hosts evening debates for
402 the women's commission of the French Communist Party, for the French
403 Scouts, for the meetings of the neighbourhood merchants' association and for
404 demonstrations in support of Tunisian students on hunger strike.

405   After this period of putting down roots in the community, a period of more
406 intense activism followed in the 1980s. In that decade, the CCO developed
407 pretty much in every direction, reaching out towards refugees, the unem-
408 ployed, the underhoused and the youth. An increasing number of organiza-
409 tions were welcomed into the CCO and the permanent staff were expanded. In
410 1984 there were 176 organizations that met at the CCO, of which about 20
411 had their headquarters there. According to Chatelan, the diversity of activities
412 made any kind of categorization virtually impossible: 'co-ownership boards,
413 works councils and 'Christmas parties',[7] charitable organizations, student orga-
414 nizations, meetings on various worldwide conflicts (as those in Northern
415 Ireland and in El Salvador) took place side by side with theatrical and musical
416 rehearsals, the latter showing a growth of 800 percent in terms of hours of
417 presence in the building from 1987 to 1989' (2012, 30). True activism took a
418 back seat in order to support the activities of cultural organizations or those
419 linked to the immigrant communities. The CCO now saw itself as 'a place for
420 the recognition and expression of different cultures', 'a promoter of action'[8]

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and an 'organization of organizations' as its members often defined it.[9] After 421
intense internal discussions about the identity of the organization, in 1989 it 422
drew up a charter in which two main priorities were identified: first, the CCO 423
should function as the head of a network of organizations; second, its primary 424
mission should be the fight against poverty in all its forms. In the following 425
decade, the connection between the CCO and government services was signifi- 426
cantly strengthened because of the demand placed on the CCO to participate 427
in the policies for neighbourhood social development,[10] in particular by con- 428
tributing to the training of managers for urban projects. There was a significant 429
increase in the financial resources available to the centre, especially thanks to 430
the involvement of the state and because there was a substantial expansion of 431
the subsidy it received from the municipal government. In the 2000s, cultural 432
activities and the economy of social solidarity were enhanced. For the leaders 433
of the centre, however, it was the prefix 'inter' that was the best way to charac- 434
terize the activities of the CCO (renamed in 2003 as the Jean-Pierre Lachaize 435
CCO after its charismatic director)—that is, interconnection with other orga- 436
nizations and interculturalism, framing a project that was now oriented towards 437
'integrating a rootedness in the local with a citywide presence; supporting indi- 438
viduals and human rights by paying particular attention to the excluded, in 439
order to give them a voice' (Chatelan 2012, 36). 440

In the conclusion of his article about the CCO, Chatelan emphasizes the 441
centre's remarkable faithfulness to its origins. I would also point out its warmth, 442
hospitality and openness. Chatelan proposes two hypotheses to explain the 443
organization's success: first, the strong value put on reflection and intentional- 444
ity, along with the intellectual foundation of which the centre has never lost 445
sight; and, second, the idea that the CCO is a 'community'. The word 'com- 446
munity' was taken on at the beginning (in the context of the 'Community of 447
Marist Brothers') but seldom used from then on, even though the idea that the 448
CCO was supposed to be something more than a simple cultural organization 449
was very widely shared among the board of directors, the paid staff and many 450
of the people who used it. All of these stakeholders recognized that there was 451
a 'CCO spirit'. How was this able to mobilize a 'community' of people who 452
felt connected to the organization? That is what I shall now examine, through 453
the lens of a particularly significant event in the centre's recent history—namely, 454
the organization of its 50th anniversary. 455

The 50th Anniversary 456

In 2009, while the steering committee for the CCO's 50th anniversary was in 457
the middle of its preparations and discussions, the director, Fernanda Leite, 458
was asked: 'How does the CCO deal with the issue of balancing an apprecia- 459
tion for the contributions of these cultures with advocacy for intangible heri- 460
tages?' She responded: 461

> We pay attention to the idea of promoting the public expression [of cultures] and 462
> the ways in which they interact with others, with the intention of constantly renew- 463

464 ing their ability to be a *language that moves freely in the world, in other words to be an*
465 *expression that is disseminated by actors who are able to act*[11] and to formulate their
466 way of 'being in the world', rather than worrying more narrowly about 'preserving
467 a heritage' … And while the CCO welcomes these 'heritages' in order to allow them
468 to exist, the *Words on the Spot* event creates a space for interaction among them.
469 Thus, they find new geographies and new horizons in order to exist with others and
470 not to be closed in on themselves and, as a result, they renew themselves.[12]

471 This interview excerpt does a good job of summing up the organization's
472 philosophy. Elsewhere it says that it wants to be an 'incubator'—that is, a place
473 that allows groups to mature and that promotes the public expression of cul-
474 tures in a spirit of sharing and of adaptation to current conditions. In this spirit,
475 heritage is not a collection to be maintained; it is action, involvement, sharing
476 and transformation.
477 The 50th anniversary was the object of lengthy preparations by a steering
478 committee made up of board members, the directors and researchers who had
479 been 'enlisted' in the action research that had been set in motion a year earlier.
480 The anniversary was seen as an effective device through which each person
481 involved, whatever their status, would be led to commit to a more active role
482 'in order to resolve some issues of legitimacy that had been getting in the way'
483 (Autant-Dorier and Aubry 2014, 49) of a reflection on the heritage dimension
484 of the CCO's activities. The plan was to involve everyone in the research, start-
485 ing from wherever their place was in the organization: 'Thus, the paid staff
486 members of the CCO were in fact involved in the anniversary initiative, whereas
487 up until that point they had been, rather, witnesses to the research' (Autant-
488 Dorier and Aubry 2014, 49). The problem for the staff members and activists
489 was that it was 'less about leaving a mark than about becoming involved in the
490 relationship and making things happen, 'working together' (Autant-Dorier   AU7
491 and Aubry 2014, 51), and that it seemed awkward, all of a sudden, to think in
492 terms of being motivated by heritage. This awkwardness was intensified by the
493 fact that the chief characteristic of the CCO, the interculturalism that was the
494 reason for all of this activity, was in fact external to the institution. It was, in
495 fact, more a characteristic of the partner organizations, the city and even the
496 world in which they were acting. So how could it be said to be connected to
497 the organization's own heritage, even if only its intangible heritage? The
498 suggestion was made to the members, whether elected or paid, that this would
499 be an 'indirect' heritage—that is, not a direct characteristic of the CCO but
500 rather a characteristic, primarily, of the organizations that it hosted and for
501 which the CCO provided the possibility of it being put into action. In fact, for
502 the CCO, interculturalism would be primarily a 'political dimension of the
503 action' (Autant-Dorier and Aubry 2014, 51) and therefore, in a way, that
504 dimension could be considered characteristic of the CCO. That is what the
505 50th anniversary would bring about.
506 The anniversary celebration was held between 12 and 19 January 2013. The
507 team of researchers was closely involved with events and activities of various

kinds that included writing a book sprint with an author from Quebec[13]; a
study workshop with master's students entitled 'Citizen Sharing: (Inter)cul-
tural Experimentations as a Mode of Citizen Activation' at which various
experiments that had been conducted with artists and researchers were pre-
sented; a debate panel on the theme of 'cultural rights, universalism and com-
munities'; a series of jointly conducted workshops on 19 January on the results
of the book sprint, a 'speed dating' event on interculturalism,[14] a workshop on
the topic of 'building the CCO of tomorrow', a 'connections lab' intended to
map the CCO's network and a CCO photo booth; the presentation of three
movies about the CCO; a debate and a round table on 'the CCO, the art of
building commonality'[15]; and a buffet dinner.

The 50th anniversary celebrations highlighted the importance of action in
the identity of the CCO within the framework of its history, as Olivier Chatelan
shows. The CCO is not a 'cultural institution' that gains legitimacy from rec-
ognition by its trustees or its public; nor is it a 'project hotel', simply providing
services to its partner organizations. 'The way in which it creates things has
more to do with the connections that it puts into operation, the people that it
mobilizes, and the places that it connects' (Autant-Dorier and Aubry 2014,
56), as the experience of the 50th anniversary celebrations shows. Area resi-
dents who came as neighbours, newly minted activists as well as old fighters of
the 1960s generation, artists who were active in Asian, African and South
American 'cultural' organizations, as well as artists specifically invited for the
occasion, academics, students, intellectuals and elected officials all met there.
They engaged in the various debates, some of them heated, and they testified
to the relationships that they had with the CCO. And yet there was something
a little disappointing in all these contributions. We did not learn anything much
that was new about the experience that all of these people had of the CCO. Some
things were confirmed, including the distance kept by the archbishopric, in the
person of the archbishop of Lyon; the activist involvement of the socialist
elected officials at the beginning of their careers; the function as an incubator
for political consciousness; and the fact that connections with the neighbour-
hood had become more tenuous. The 50th anniversary celebrations confirmed
the prominent position of 'inter', which we already knew about; the depth of
activist involvement, along with its corollary—namely, clashes with the extreme
right; and the important role the CCO had taken within the landscape of refu-
gee culture and protection in Lyon.

Nevertheless, in retrospect it could be said that the 50th anniversary cele-
brations were a kind of epiphany, a reminder to the members of the CCO of
everything that had been important to them since the centre was founded,
everything that each of them cared about, and that the celebrations made it
possible to set down in black and white; to present all this to the public in a
substantial way and, finally, to pass it on, in particular such themes as hospital-
ity, interculturalism, respect for otherness and commitment—nothing really
new, in the end. And yet the 50th anniversary can be seen as an affirmation of
the fact that what really matters, above all, is putting into practice and renewing

what one is in daily life, in a collective act that, on this occasion, is produced by the organization of a commemorative event. It is indeed a matter of heritage because it is something people care about, it is the very heart of this 'CCO spirit' that is often referred to but hard to explain, something that has been asserted for decades, it seems, which shows that it matters to people that it be passed on. This heritage could be considered to be 'weak' because, like Granovetter's weak ties (1983), it seems to be all the stronger for not being very institutionalized and for having been built up without a lot of fuss, which gives it that much more leverage in its ties to other groups and organizations without trespassing on their uniqueness. It is effective because it is open, and because it is not constrained by canonical narratives, iconic images, or sites that must be protected.

Conclusion

In conclusion, let me return to the three situations that I proposed at the beginning. The gentrification of Palma de Mallorca—though one could of course have found something very similar in many other places like it—brings the urban politics of the rehabilitation of old neighbourhoods and the desire to keep property values up face to face with the residents' attachment to a local neighbourliness that they consider to be their heritage. The heritagization in this case has to do with spaces, buildings and lifestyles all at the same time. It involves public policies as well as residents, but it can also be an instrument for mobilizing opposition to governmental heritage policies. In Villeneuve d'Ascq, the heritagization of the founding utopias seems tenuous; it has not been asserted very much or at all, it is not very visible within the urban space for anyone who does not know the city's history, and yet, from time to time, these utopias reappear in the public discourse, in the commitment of certain residents to their neighbourhoods or in citizen initiatives. There is no real network of residents and elected officials upholding this heritage, and yet, in our research, individuals who were strangers to each other or only slightly acquainted used almost exactly the same discourse of nostalgia about the city's past and seemed ready to defend the values and ideas which had been adopted 30 years earlier. These utopias still retain some of their symbolic and social effectiveness, much like the more or less idealized imaginary of the neighbourliness of Palma de Mallorca's working-class neighbourhoods. At the CCO, the spatial and material inscription of the generous ideas of its early years is not obvious, and yet the CCO, too, seems to have managed the feat of having held on to those ideas since the heyday of humanist activism in the 1970s. What we can learn from the CCO example, seen through the celebration of its 50th anniversary, is that what is truly the heritage in that institution, what the various stakeholders really care about, whether they are activisits, staff members, partners or simply regular visitors, is the 'community' of practices and action constituted by the CCO. This is a community with constantly changing boundaries, which involves multiple activities ranging from accommodating refugees

to cultural activities, from defending 'communitarian' organizations against
very sceptical state powers to giving legal and technical aid to foreign artists
and facilitating their entry into Lyon's artistic world.

In the end, what these three situations have in common is that the heritage
that they create is built through practice; it is a symbolic resource that is acti-
vated collectively as a way for groups to defend themselves against things that
seem as though they might attack their lifestyles or their ideals. Even if they
happen to share some things—such as a taste for neighbourliness, the memory
of old utopias that moved them to action in the past, or values of solidarity and
hospitality—that is not all that connects all the people involved here. After all,
there are many people who could feel affected but who nevertheless keep their
distance. What really creates heritage is that these ideals and values are shared,
put into movement through action, and that through them, people feel
empowered to act publicly. This is not about 'capitalism's cultural shift', which
creates economic value through gentrification, nor about the 'heritage com-
munities' that UNESCO protects in order to promote intangible heritage (i.e.
the heritage of residents rather than of institutions). This is also not about the
territorial marketing that is so beloved by public bodies nor, of course, museo-
logical or monumental collecting. What makes these 'weak' forms of heritage
so symbolically and socially effective comes down to their ability to mobilize
people and groups, and that must be constantly renewed.

NOTES

1. http://www.coe.int/fr/web/conventions/full-list/-/conventions/rms/
   09000083746.
2. This research was carried out in two phases. The first, from 2002 to 2003, was
   a collective project examining the evolution of the notion of public space in new
   cities. The second, from 2002 to 2006, looked at the production of intermedi-
   ate spaces in the vicinity of Villeneuve d'Ascq. This was based on multiple
   sources: interviews in the Lille region and in Paris with developers, landscapers
   and architects who had been involved in the construction of the city; regular
   observations in various contexts, including participation in guided tours of the
   city, cultural activities, and visiting stores and personal connections (of which we
   had many because Villeneuve d'Ascq is a university town); a systematic review of
   the municipal as well as the institutional press from 1977 to 1985, and again
   from 2003 to 2005; queries to the National Institute of Statistics and Economic
   Studies and to city services about the city's sociodemographic data from 1977
   to 2006; and in-depth and repeated interviews with 22 residents beyond our
   personal connections.
3. This neighborhood was not part of the original plans and it was the subject of a
   memorable battle between the local government and the residents, who were
   against the project, which was supported by the state and by Etablissement
   Public d'Aménagement de Lille Est.
4. *La Tribune*, February 2000, no. 151.
5. I rely here on a collective research project led by the anthropologist Claire
   Autant-Dorier from 2012 to 2014. The team included a social psychologist, an

anthropologist, a videographer, a doctoral student in anthropology, the historian Olivier Chatelan and me. I have been involved with the centre since 2007, helping to facilitate its work. I have also participated in several studies and reflections on its workings and its institutional memory, particularly the 50th anniversary project, which is described later. During the latter, I was involved as a member of the research steering committee and a co-director of the thesis.

6. Father Jean Latreille came from a family of socially active Catholics who were well known in Lyon, which allowed him to involve a number of Lyon's industrial employers in the CCO's early years.

7. 'Christmas parties' are popular traditional events that gather the employees or stakeholders together in the last days before the Christmas holidays in many companies, associations and public offices. They are called 'Christmas trees' (*arbres de Noël*).

8. From a speech by President Jean-Michel Privolt (1983–1987) (quoted in Chatelan 2012, p. 31).

9. For example, in 1985 the CCO supported the creation of the Villeurbanne Organization for Housing Rights (Association villeurbannaise pour le droit au logement), whose first goal was to facilitate access to decent housing for foreigners. The organization had its headquarters at the CCO, which provided rent-free rooms and equipment. The permanent staff and the board members of the CCO were involved in the life of the organization as well (Chatelan 2012).

10. Arising in the early 1980s in response to the social issues around subsidized housing areas, these policies became institutionalized during the following decade.

11. My emphasis.

12. One of the main cultural events organized every year by the CCO.

13. A book sprint is an intensive collaborative writing practice which takes place over several days (in this case five days). Twelve people participated, writing online on the CCO's core topics: connection to communities, attachment to a universe that feeds on diversity, involvement and social transformation.

14. Based on interviews that had been carried out beforehand, the participants were asked to role-play encounters.

15. Quotations here are from the programme for the event.

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740 memory, public policies and social imagination. He has recently initiated research on
741 'Pratiques (inter)culturelles et institution d'un patrimoine 50 ans d'activités au CCO-
742 Jean-Pierre Lachaize (Villeurbanne)'.

Author Queries

Chapter No.: 17   0003176141

Queries	Details Required	Author's Response
AU1	Please check and confirm the affiliation details and amend if necessary.	
AU2	In "The heritage field has grown considerably in recent decades,", please avoid non-specific time-relative phrases (e.g. in recent decades) and change to a specific date range, the timing of which will remain clear even as this book dates. Please check for such phrases throughout.	
AU3	In "The atmosphere can become tense when the residents believe that their points of view are not being heard. Later, other systems were set up to" the tense changes from present to past. Please review tense changes here and throughout and make tense consistent where appropriate.	
AU4	Please clarify meaning of "From Urban Utopias to the 'Imaginary in Act' of Local Residents".	
AU5	Where possible, please place note cues at the end of the relevant sentence. E.g. cue for Note 6.	
AU6	Please insert opening quote mark to match closing quote mark in "a growth of 800 percent in terms of hours of presence in the building from 1987 to 1989'".	
AU7	In "The problem for the staff members and activists was that it was 'less about leaving a mark than about becoming involved in the relationship and making things happen, 'working together'", please add closing quote mark to match opening quote mark before "less".	
AU8	Please provide the volume number for the reference "Tornatore (2006)".	
AU9	Please check and confirm the inserted volume number for the reference "Vadelorge (2003)".	