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Attempts to Define Cultural Heritage in Hungary

Why does a historian begin thinking about a phenomenon called "cultural heritage"? Perhaps it is best distinguished from its synonyms of "tradition" and "memory" because it derives from legal terminology, i.e. it emphasises the mutual relationship between inheritor and devisor, rather than the inheritance and its treatment. The inheritance, even if it does not change in its physical appearance significantly, may acquire new meanings with the passing of time. As a historian I would like to know what the same thing meant/means to the devisor and the inheritor: the two must be considered of equal rank. A historian is obviously interested in changes in time. It is all right if he can describe a condition, but he really fulfils his task if he can also tell a story: from where do we get to where? Is there a middle way between the two approaches to the past? One only regards the past as merely a concept of the present, the other sees ourselves as inheritors of a past without reservations.

The cultural-historical comparison cannot be exactly right, but "cultural heritage" reminds us of the Renaissance court *Kunstkammer* or *Wunderkammer* compiling objects for their rarity or speciality, or we recall the time when national museums were established, which gathered various collections to show them to the public. The notion of "heritage" is challenging because it can bring together scientific fields involved with objects of memory (archaeology, museology, library and archive studies, etc.). At the same time it also advances from objects to the intellect, thus involving literary scholarship, ethnography or cultural anthropology.

This study attempts to review how the notion of heritage appeared during the Horn government and what scope it had achieved during the follow-

ing Orbán cabinet[1] by the time of writing. The period under review stretches from 1997, when the law on culture was passed, to 2000. It will not go into the Law LXIV on heritage protection of 2001. At least four levels of the theme can be highlighted: theory, legislation, policy and social reception. How do they include the term "heritage"? Does it have a definite image? The basic question, as with researching contemporary history, is where the sources of material can be found and whether they can be considered sources according to history's professional criteria.[2] Of course, such normative texts cannot be expected necessarily to define an expression that needs to be debated; however, such experiments should take place. Analysis of the texts at our disposal can at least show the current meaning of the notion, cast a light on the conscious or loose use of the word and the legislators' conscious or spontaneous assumptions.[3]

A decisive reason for the appearance of the notion in its present form in Hungary could have been the position of the European Union. Inter-governmental cooperation initiated by the Council of Europe has been concerned with outstanding historical monuments since the 1960s; later this was extended more generally to the built heritage. In 1992 it was replaced by the notion of cultural heritage, which for the time being highlighted built environment, although some new components were included (the agricultural, technological and industrial environment, landscapes of cultural value, and certain elements of moveable effects and urban structures forming a heritage for future generations were also considered). In 1993 cooperation was extended to include east-central European countries and four years later the currently valid concept was outlined, which intends to show the common European heritage and the differences simultaneously on local, regional, national and international levels. It is regarded as an important to economic development,

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1 The government led by Viktor Orbán, 1998–2002, formed by the Alliance of Young Democrats-Hungarian Civic Party (AYD-HCP) (Fiatal Demokraták Szövetsége-Magyar Polgári Párt – FIDESZ-MPP), the Hungarian Democratic Forum (HDF) (Magyar Demokrata Fórum- MDF), and the Independent Smallholders Party (ISHP) (Független Kisgazda Párt – FKgP).

2 The use of websites as sources is problematical. However, a significant part of the information can only be found here. The website of an institution increasingly has more information than appears in its printed publications. For example, the website (*http://www.nkom.hu*) of the Ministry of National Cultural Heritage (Nemzeti Kulturális Örökség Minisztériuma – NKÖM) provides much more material than its paper *Krónikás*.

3 In the future and with the inclusion of further sources, the question of how representative this analysis is, can be answered.

and the significance of cultural tourism is emphasised. Cooperation between the state and the private sector is being urged. It is proposed that the state should restrict its role to supervision, making initiatives and harmonisation in the process of decentralisation and reorganisation being conducted in several countries, but at the same time it should not give up its responsibility for protecting the cultural heritage. The "message" of cultural heritage is intended to be publicised via science and education, and interested professionals are expected to coordinate their work via a European information network.[4]

The word "heritage" has been more emphasised in political public speech in Hungary since the new cultural ministry included it in its name in 1998 and used it as a brand name of its character. However, the notion was already used during the previous government's term of office, which is not surprising if we think of the EU proposals at the time. The then Ministry of Culture and Education had a Department of Cultural Heritage; that was the time when the Hungarian National Committee of World Heritage and the Cultural Heritage Directorate were set up.[5] The law on protected monuments adopted in June 1997 launched the notion in its introduction as a reference. The law aims to protect "those architectural, technical and related artistic objects, which manifest our history's irreplaceable mementos and promote cultural heritage as special value for society, as part of the national assets." These are "defining marks of the country's and each place's image, carriers of cultural traditions, and they form part of the historical and national consciousness."[6] Thus it can be seen that "heritage" involves the social and national context of the older notions of "historical records", "tradition"

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4 *Compendium of basic texts of the Council of Europe in the field of cultural heritage.* Strasbourg, 1998, 10–17., 23–25., 61–67. My thanks to Ildikó Deák (NKÖM), for putting the material at my disposal.

5 The Department of Public Collections in the Ministry of Culture and Education was renamed as the Department of Cultural Heritage in 1996 following an agreement with the Dutch ministry. (I thank Katalin Wollák [Cultural Heritage Directorate] for this information and for her remarks about my study.) In February 1998 it invited applications from libraries and public collections: *Művelődési Közlöny*, 1998, No. 27., 3180–3182; Hungarian National Committee of World Heritage: 44/1997. (XII. 29.) KTM-measure; the founding document of the Cultural Heritage Directorate, which refers to Law 1997. CXL.: 29/1998. (VI. 11) MKM-measure, *Művelődési Közlöny*, 1998, No. 19. Vol. II. (10 July), 2476–2477; its modification by the Orbán cabinet: 13/2000 (VII. 11.) NKÖM-measure, *Kulturális Közlöny*, 2000, No. 15. (24 August), 569–570. The Cultural Heritage Directorate was set up by the decision of the previous government but began its work following the general election.

6 Law 1997. LIV. On monument protection

and "identity"; the text does not use it again but turns to the special terminology applied in the field of monument protection.

The law on "the protection of cultural assets and museums, public libraries and general education" was adopted in December 1997.[7] The title itself shows that it is rather heterogeneous. Paradoxically, its scope is potentially wider considering what it does not extend to: it does not concern issues included in the law on archives of 1995, environment protection of 1996, on the formation and protection of the built environment and monument protection. However, their enumeration suggests that all this belongs to the same field.[8] Does the law make an attempt to describe these fields in a common way? The expressions "assets belonging to cultural heritage" and "assets of cultural heritage" are synonyms of cultural assets. They play a role in "how history is shaped and how national, nationality and ethnic minority self-knowledge is being formed: learning about them is a citizen's right and their protection is a social responsibility". Here we see again that old notions are used in a new context, as in the law on monument protection. The textual structure shows that "land of archaeological significance and moveable assets of listed buildings" are to be included in the notion of cultural heritage. However, it does not state or deny the same with respect to documents in libraries. At the same time, "irreplaceable assets of outstanding significance not kept in public collections or museums" but declared protected are included in the law. As a summary we can say that the law, which was prepared taking EU regulations into account and developed as a source for ministerial measures, treated cultural heritage as a reference or a loose collective notion. It did not make any attempt to define it, even in the supplement, which explained the notions used in the law. It is worth pondering whether this is a weakness or virtue, giving priority to practice. This law stipulated the tasks of the Cultural Heritage Directorate; the founding document of the new institution was published a year later in summer 1998.[9] The two measures, besides giving the name of cultural heritage to the Board, do not use the expression any more. Nor do they specify cultural assets. This lack of definition may be balanced by the fact that the task of the new administrative authority is nothing

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7   Law 1997. LIV. On monument protection

8   The ministry then might as well have continued the logic of legislation according to fields; perhaps it made steps to unite these fields in order to increase state support. (In this respect it may have preceded the next government's policy.)

9   *Művelődési Közlöny*, 1998, No.19. Vol. II., 2476–2477; modification: *Kulturális Közlöny,* 2000, No. 15., 569–570.

else but to define what practically belongs to cultural assets as far as it supervises the matter continuously. It decides whether assets are declared as protected, whether protection is completed, archaeological explorations are permitted, and it also keeps records of stolen cultural treasures, etc.

The election programme of the FIDESZ – Hungarian Civic Party objected to the Horn government's cultural policy in saying that the "protection and renewal of the built and objective part of the national cultural heritage" was being lost. It referred to the financing system of the National Cultural Fund being unable to sponsor investments. It tried to resolve the problem with a centralisation procedure: "only the concentration and increase of exclusively central state means, established to protect national heritage, can help in this field". It promised to establish an independent government body to unite culture, monument protection and tourism, which belonged to three ministries, with reference to foreign, especially British, examples, and it also stipulated that it would serve the protection of national heritage. The programme did not say that it would involve division of the Ministry of Culture and Education, although it was not difficult to guess this from the sentence which said that "when setting up the new structure, we will not forget the important connection between culture and education", since the market for cultural treasures presumes education. Mapping heritage did not take place in this text: the concept relating to monument protection was worked out in detail, but it remained unclear what was included in actual heritage. At the same time, with reference to monuments, it was stipulated that they had a potential to advance the economy and tourism and their integrated protection contributed to regional rehabilitation. It was here where a more general idea appeared, i.e. "cultural heritage can also mean a source of development for the country during the time of EU accession". On the one hand the programme intended to concentrate the state means of culture financing, while on the other it called for generating a condition of self-financing in "integrated protection", stating that "common heritage requires concerted and joint activity with the participation of citizens, non-governmental organisations and the state". According to this the "community" is able to maintain and increase the demand on the "market" of cultural treasures. Although it promised temperance in state intervention, with reference to the geo-political position and the desired long-term successes of the country, it stipulated that cultural policy, considered as strategically important, "should enable citizens to respond to the challenges expected in a world becoming interna-

tional by making historical-cultural identity conscious and at the same time enable them to accommodate positive effects successfully".[10] Between these goals it is easy to see the influence of the EU 1997 concept.

During the elections the FIDESZ – Hungarian Civic Party already stated *expressis verbis* that if it won it would divide the Ministry of Culture and Education into two separate ministries.[11] In the month of negotiating the coalition and forming the government the press referred to the new government office as the ministry of culture and it was possible to guess and then know whom the minister and his deputies would be before the Ministry of National Cultural Heritage had been actually established.[12] During the coalition negotiations other ministries were being debated and obviously the negotiations had to finish before the new name was made public. This took place four days before the government programme was announced. At that time what the new ministry would be in charge of was unclear: would ecclesiastical matters belong to the new ministry or remain with the Office of the Prime Minister, where they had belonged during the previous administration? When Parliament debated the government programme the opposition suggested that the new ministry should be simply called "Ministry of Culture", because with the inclusion of the expression "national heritage" the name would not express the many and colourful sides of culture, and would turn towards the past.[13] The fact that the objection was raised refers to the contradiction in the use of the notion: if you like it can involve national value conservatism, but it is also able to express a varied cultural community as indicated by the EU.

Public attention did not focus on any attempts to define what heritage was in the first year of the ministry. The construction of the National Thea-

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10 Szabadság és jövő. A polgári jövő programja. FIDESZ-Magyar Polgári Párt 1998. (*Freedom and Future. The Programme of the Civic Future. FIDESZ-Hungarian Civic Party. 1998*). Chapters "Protection of Built Environmental Treasures, Financing Culture and Cultural Policy" cover the problem, pp. 54–56, 121–125. Law 1997. CXL. aimed to "establish a public fund for the protection of cultural heritage" (point d. Article 52.) The FIDESZ-Magyar Polgári Párt's manifesto says that "after forming the government we will immediately establish the National Heritage Fund, which could then start working"., 122.

11 *Magyar Hírlap,* 18 May 1998.

12 *Magyar Hírlap,* 26 May 1998; *Népszabadság,* 3 June 1998.; 13 June 1998; 16 June 1998; 17 June 1998; 18 June 1998; 25 June 1998.

13 Protocol of Parliamentary debates 25 and 30 June 1998. *http://www.mkogy.hu*; cf. *Népszabadság*. 1 July 1998.

tre, the change in its location, the call for the plans, Hermann Nitsch's shocking exhibition, the Frankfurt Book Fair were discussed. It was also a subject of debate that the National Cultural Fund, which had had a separate budget to finance culture, became financially dependent on the new ministry's central budget.[14] In an interview, deputy minister Gergely Prőhle considered as a shortcoming of the ministry's first year, when it was busy with reorganisation, that it did not manage to make "secular public opinion" accept the "activity of the churches". "When we included church matters in the activity of the cultural ministry, our goal was to make their value creating and preserving role clear in as wide a circle as possible…This idea is difficult to be accepted since we are either accused of wanting to "clericalise" culture or make the churches »secular«".[15] The issue may also be regarded as a dilemma of how to define heritage.

How clear is the role of heritage in the ministry's policy and in the coordination of the different professions for the public, and what areas are covered? A government measure on the tasks and authority of the minister of national cultural heritage was adopted on 16 September 1998.[16] Following the introduction, it stipulates monument protection, connections with the churches, caring for the culture of national and ethnic minorities and international cultural connections in separate paragraphs. How does the expression "heritage" appear? The minister works for the implementation of the government's cultural policy "in the interest of the freedom of artistic life, securing freedom of conscience and religion, the development of national culture and the protection of cultural heritage and monuments". If we look into it, cultural heritage *and* monuments are co-ordinate expressions, and it can be perceived as if the latter was not part of the former or it can also be seen as if the field of monument protection was clear-cut, whereas the notion of heritage was not to be defined there and then. The expression "cultural assets" does not disappear either: the minister administers their protection "primarily via the Cultural Heritage Directorate and manages his tasks concerning monu-

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14 Attila Tasnádi (ed.): *A Nemzeti Kulturális Alapprogram Évkönyve 1999*. (*The National Cultural Fundamental Programme Yearbook 1999*). Budapest, 2000, 9–14., 15–19.

15 *Magyar Nemzet*, 17 July 1999. Several interviews were published with the ministers of National Cultural Heritage about the ministry's goals and operation. With József Hámori: *Magyar Hírlap*, 10 July 1999, *Magyar Napló*, September 1998, 3–6., *Magyar Napló*, December 1999, 5–8.; with Zoltán Rockenbauer entering office: *Magyar Nemzet*, 24 December 1999.

16 *Művelődési Közlöny*, 1998, No. 32. Vol. I (10 Nov.), 3293–3295.

ment protection via the National Board for the Protection of Historic Monuments". Both cases show that the text involves an unconscious difference between protected monuments and cultural assets or heritage *excluding monuments*; the former are not described exactly. The same division can be seen here as in the programme of FIDESZ-HCP, which specified the built and objective parts of heritage. Cultural heritage can be divided into national and universal parts, and tasks related to them are summarised in a list of three: protection, scientific exploration and making them a public treasure. (These three can be seen in later texts, too.)

It has already been mentioned that the law of 1997 was prepared with reference to EU measures; despite this fact the Ministry of National Cultural Heritage remained in charge of legal harmonisation concerning the illegal trade in cultural assets, their export and intellectual ownership. The *Raphael* Programme of the Commission of Europe ended in 1999. Hungary could have applied to as an associate member together with two EU member countries for the protection and use of moveable cultural assets, professional exchange and the promotion of gaining access to fixed cultural assets.[17] The Culture 2000 programme was a continuation, interpreting heritage in a wider sense. Participation in international festivals such as Europalia '99 in Brussels or at the events of "Krakow, capital of culture" was included in the above. The "Heritage Campaign" organised by the Council of Europe tried to promote the ideal of common heritage by introducing the historical treasures of religious places, crossroads along historical highways, universities and associations of towns. The Cultural Heritage Days had a similar goal, although aimed at the local or national identity, when they opened to the public for a weekend buildings which are known by only certain groups of people or are always closed – this year medieval churches and church ruins, next year educational institutions opened their gates.

We can gain further ideas as to what may be involved in the field of heritage if we look at the ministry's relevant measures, decisions prepared for the government and tenders. Three can be found among measures and decisions that are important for our theme: one is about the supervision of cultural institutions (museums, libraries and monument protection), another is about an agreement with the churches and religious communities and the third makes arrangements for the Millenary celebrations.[18] The measure

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17 *Kulturális Közlöny*, 1999, No. 2., 46.
18 *Kulturális Közlöny*, 1999, No. 1., 4–5., 2000, No 1., 1–2.; No. 2., 49–51.

adopted in 1999 by the Ministry of National Cultural Heritage on "archaeological explorations and their authorisation procedure" is the most interesting for us.[19] The expression "archaeological heritage" appears in it. "Any exploration moving the soil which uncovers the elements of archaeological heritage" is regarded as excavation. According to this, heritage exists in an invisible way, even when we do not know about it; that is how we vindicate future findings. Beside this "explored archaeological heritage" exists, which must be protected. "Natural scientific cultural assets" are also mentioned with the above, though they do not really belong to the same category.

The peculiar approach, which adds culture as a general category to areas that can be more easily defined, still existed in 1999: a tender we can read about organisations "protecting artistic, educational, built *or* cultural heritage or being active in this field" (author's emphasis).[20] The idea is rarely associated with institutions or organisations except for the "treasures of ecclesiastic cultural heritage". The Kunó Klebelsberg scholarship is publicised for the "support of the exploration, protection and issue of objects and written findings of our cultural heritage abroad"; another version of the text omits the notion and easily replaces it with the more traditional phrase, i.e. "objects and written finds of Hungarian language and culture".[21] A government decision of 2000 stipulates the duties of establishing contacts and promotion of the Hungarian cultural centres abroad in this spirit.[22] Thus here we can see over the border, a virtual spread of latent heritage.

The tender entitled "Our heritage and treasures" expects villages and towns to promote "so far unknown national cultural treasures, which the relevant village and the whole country can be proud of, to the general public as a result of research, exploration and analytical work".[23] Here the levels of what is known cause the problem: what is known at a local level should also be known nationally.

In March 1999 a tender was issued for museum, libraries and archives in order to "make digital those information assets important for Hungarian cultural heritage".[24] The difference in word usage is also interesting whereby

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19 *Kulturális Közlöny*, 1999, No. 19., 633–636.
20 *Kulturális Közlöny*, 1999, No. 4., 95.
21 *Kulturális Közlöny*, 1999, No.12., 379; No. 15., 457.
22 *Kulturális Közlöny*, 2000, No.5., 137–138.
23 *Kulturális Közlöny*, 1999, No. 7., 178–179.
24 *Kulturális Közlöny*, 1999, No. 6., 132–137.

museums and libraries are invited to explore and publicise collections that are valuable from the viewpoint of intellectual heritage, the word "material" is used in case of archives. In these cases heritage is located in the semantics of *something that had already existed and what is still to be explored*, while digitalisation carries the meaning of *a modern reshaping of what exists and distribution.*

Work undertaken with the support of the National Heritage Programme was part of the preparations for the Millennium.[25] The programme began in order to "protect, maintain and restore the built and archaeological cultural heritage" and besides royal towns, castles, small churches from the age of Árpád dynasty and ecclesiastical monuments, it provided resources for villages which otherwise would not have received them. Moreover, it made explorations outside Hungary possible, so it searched for the locations of heritage vertically in Hungarian society as well as horizontally the geographical sense. Tenders "to protect intellectual heritage" could also be entered within the scope of the programme. An account made in county Nógrád shows that the above received approximately one quarter of the sum that was spent on monument protection projects. Besides the county archives, libraries and museums were the successful bidders and the topics included local history and ethnographic research, publications and exhibitions.[26] Neither did the separately advertised Intellectual Heritage Programme invite direct analysis or assessment of intellectual traditions, as the name suggests, but rather for exploration and preservation, while calling for museums, libraries and archives to participate.

A theme of future research could concern the different contexts in which "heritage" is used by social organisations, cultural foundations, associations, the press and exhibitions, i.e. outside political decision making. Here I only mention two examples. An explanation at the exhibition "In the Centre of Europe", which presented an extensive and reflective view on history and which was otherwise excellent in its collection of objects, describes the turn in central European history when the countries in the region adopted Christianity and joined the then Europe as "new heritage". The other example is the Hungarian Heritage prize. It was set up by the Foundation for Hungary and during the 1990s it awarded the prize to bequeath posterity with the names of personalities who, despite the negative events of half a century, created something lasting. Thus "Hungarian heritage" cannot be grasped as an

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25 *Kulturális Közlöny*, 1999, No. 7., 181–186.
26 *Kulturális Közlöny*, 2000, No. 3., 116–118.

object, neither is it intellectual but relates rather to names or the value of individual efforts symbolised by names. The gesture, on the one hand, indicates that heritage had survived despite the inimical conditions of bequeathing, while on the other it proposes itself as the legator.[27]

The above perhaps shows that in those years the practical use of the notion manifested a search for the nature and whereabouts of heritage. Things included in heritage were in movement from many points of view. The protection of new monuments was arranged (care for folk and industrial monuments, and sometimes monuments of the socialist era, is striking), while others ceased to be protected; and meanwhile the concepts of the profession changed.[28] In order to recover art treasures appropriated during World War II, museums and the national archives were checked and a list of art treasures demanded back by the Hungarian state was prepared.[29] The "demolished, damaged and unprepared" monuments in public places were renewed. Among them there were some, which used to be considered as a memento or symbol in a certain political-ideological era, and became this again after a long time.[30] Social events took place to celebrate restored monuments and also "mobilise heritage", while "publishing archive materials prepares diffusion". The programme with the telling title The Last Minute restarted the collection of folk music, which stopped with World War II, and was complemented by the issue of a record series called New Motherland. A National Piety Commission was set up, which assigned cemeteries and locations for burials as part of a "National Pantheon".[31] For some time the Digital Literature Academy, publishing contemporary authors, was intended to be called the Association of Digital Immortals.[32]

It is not only the material structure of heritage, which was flexible, but so was the notion of heritage. Built heritage seemed to be the only fixed point.

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27 *Népszabadság*, 22 June 1998.
28 Lővei, Pál: "A műemlékvédelem táguló körei" (*Expanding Circles of Monument Protection*), and by the same author: "Gyorsjelentések a kilencvenes évekről" (*Fast reports on the 1990s*). *Műemléklap. Az Országos Műemlékvédelmi Hivatal tájékoztatója*, 2000, No. 3–4., 21, 28.
29 "Itt a műtárgy, ott az igény" (*The art object is here, the demand is there*). Tamás Szőnyei's interview with Zsolt Visy, deputy state secretary of NKÖM. *Magyar Narancs*, 1998. (*http://www.net.hu/mancs/1_9/globusz4.html*)
30 *Kulturális Közlöny*, 2000, No. 5., 142. A few "national-flag monuments" are also included in the monuments to be restored. They were erected during the time of irredentist politics in the inter-war period.
31 *Kulturális Közlöny*, 1999, No. 23., 897–898.
32 *Népszabadság*, 3 June 1998.

This is not by chance, since the meaning began there. Whatever was an outside received addition like moveable or cultural assets, or each profession tried to define its own meaning. "Intellectual heritage" was the most difficult to define and was manifested mainly in materials and objects. To what degree branches of science and professions were connected to the heritage discourse in international forums and how much they profit from their theoretical and practical consequences was a grey area for the general public at that moment. New scientific discourse would provide an opportunity for the interested professions to see how or whether at all the notion of heritage could be used in their fields. Does a particular profession gain by that, or is its status in scientific life adversely modified and lumped in with others? Certain professions (such as monument protection, archaeology and museology) seem to face serious conceptual, technical and financial problems concerning the issue of what to regard as part of heritage, whereas professions concerned with objects only indirectly or hardly at all can use heritage more easily.

The system of applications could serve the idea of community and difference represented by the EU, its adaptation in Hungary or even the idea of post-socialist nation building, whereby the components of heritage were bricks. Within the outlined concept the system included only a few restrictions, therefore it attempted to mobilise different social levels although it did not really give a theoretical definition of heritage. What heritage really was, was endorsed by practice. However, it must be added that an "integrated heritage protection law" was being prepared, which promised "modern and uniform regulation" on behalf of "both the authority and science".[33]

Concerning the above, a cultural political dilemma must be mentioned. The government put forward a programme to concentrate the financing of culture, then made local communities interested in the joint protection and utilisation of heritage with a tender system. Did this represent a transitional period in the process outlined by the EU and adopted in Hungary, which points at the local and regional self-financing of culture, or did this consolidate the position of the state in the end?[34]

33 The law intended to set up an Office for the Protection of Cultural heritage, which would be formed as a legal successor to the National Monument Protection Inspectorate and would amalgamate with the Cultural Heritage Directorate.

34 It must be added that, although the EU agreements provide general proposals in the field of heritage protection, it still depends on the individual member-states what licences they grant, for example, in the rather problematic issue of the free movement over borders of

Let us make a detour to the theme of the Millennium in Hungary. The year 2000 had extra significance in Hungary, since it marked the 1000th anniversary of the coronation of King Stephen, the country's first monarch. Although there were many points, which connected the discourse on heritage and the Millenary celebrations, it is worth separating the two. As I see it, the occasion to celebrate realised the opportunities hidden in the notion of forming identity. The previous government had already expressed the intention. The government decision of 1996 on the "celebration of one thousand years of the Hungarian state" aimed at celebrating the Millennium so that it "would contribute to strengthening our national self-knowledge, self-appreciation and our international standing", and it promoted the acceleration of restoring the "built heritage representing the thousand years of the Hungarian state" (meaning mainly memorial places to kings and queens) and the reconstruction of the "national institutions of cultural heritage".

The Orbán government in its decision on the Millenary activities proposed a "new cultural paradigm". Looking at it closely, the respective passage did not specify a structural or intellectual change in culture but referred to the *purpose* of change and defines this in the following: "Hungarian citizens, gaining strength in their trust in themselves and the country, may become able to face the global challenges of the world and create new cultural assets, which will enrich the culture of the world and Europe".[35] Let us recall that the idea of being strong against the negative challenges of globalisation and the reception of its positive values could already be found in the FIDESZ-HCP manifesto. The general introduction to the seven tenders advertised jointly for the Millennium added "the country is preparing for the celebration with a series of programmes at home and abroad, with strengthening and renewing our national heritage".[36]

What can be said about the long-term effects of these events? Restored buildings and published historical material are undoubtedly lasting results of the Millenary period.[37] But how does cultural heritage, which has been connected to the Millennium in recent years, really affect the much mentioned identity?

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cultural assets or the role of the state. However, it may happen that the EU will have some demands in the case of projects implemented with EU funds.

35 *Kulturális Közlöny*, 1999, No. 1., 4–5.

36 *Kulturális Közlöny*, 1999, No. 7., 174–177.

37 See for example: "Oszlopokat emeltünk, hogy beszéljék a múltakat" (*We have erected columns to speak of the past*). Tamási, Judit (ed.): *A millenniumi műemlékhelyreállítások lexikona*. (*Encyclopaedia of Millenary restorations of monuments*), Budapest: NKÖM-OMvH, 2000.

A well-known principle of cultural-historical research is that "down there" in the receiving medium things are not necessarily the same as is thought "up there", where the message is formulated.[38] A museum exhibition or a celebration is the "message" made by local and national politicians and experts, but how do the restored monuments find their place in the weekdays when the celebrations are over? How does the memory of functions remain in the individual and "collective" (if there is such a thing) consciousness? Paraphrasing it: where is heritage in the line of factors that affect the consciousness of an individual or a community? The Millenary programme intended to represent many colours and differences, but it conceived them in a large national framework: since it was about a national celebration, the emphasis was inevitably on not looking at the different colours separately but realising how the total image is made up. What kind of result do we get if such theoretical categories like "civic", "community" and "heritage" are replaced by "a village" "its population" or "objects of remembrance"? This could be the theme of historical, cultural and anthropological research in the coming years.

Besides the rather paternalistic "patrimonium", several metaphors and models describe and interpret culture emphasising different aspects. It would be wrong to think that a single notion, despite its universal attempts, totally defines culture: there are no "eyes" that could see through it in its entirety and depth. It is difficult to get rid of the feeling that the state-authority invitation calling society to some cultural activity hides some kind of demand, while some cultural trends and products will remain without the patrimonial blessing. What is the connection between cultural heritage and modernity? How is cultural heritage connected to a present or future oriented cultural quest in literature or the arts (to what used to be called the *avant-garde*)? Can cultural policy support this in the name of heritage without making the contemporary artist a prisoner of eternity's imperative, while breathing life, correctly, into museum pieces? What do national, regional and local institutions think about the "society" which calls for the protection of heritage? Can this society interpret and value heritage? It appears as if the discourse all over the world aims to counterbalance and eliminate the effects of

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38 Moreover, it is also possible that the "occasional history" of functions as seen on a communal level does not bind those celebrating to the actual past but to a "communal experience projected to the future". Horváth, Zsolt K.: "Elképzelt múlt, felidézett jövő. Három séta az „örökség" erdejében (*Imagined Past, Recalled Future. Three Walks in the Woods of "Heritage"*). *Múltunk*, 2000, No. 3., 199.

social and economic modernisation. Might this not cause a schizophrenic condition? Culture may become encapsulated if it does not manage to be part of modern life.

We take the notion of heritage seriously now we have been presented with it by the international political constellation. We can say generally that the real intellectual venture is not the mere "stocktaking" of past culture in itself, although this requires a great effort and must also be acknowledged. Do we learn something more about ourselves, which combines acceptance and self-criticism or do we repeat ourselves? The notion of "heritage" involves the question of succession: who wants to have a right to it? We are talking about national cultural heritage, but what does "national" mean?[39] The government decree about celebrating the Hungarian Millennium said that the series of celebrations are "shared by every member of the Hungarian nation, and of national and ethnic minorities living in Hungary with no regard to gender, religion or origin". Let us not forget that the heritage we are talking about was created in a historical age, which preceded the appearance of the concept of nation in the 19th century. That was first latched onto by the 19th century – but how much do we keep and what do we think belongs to the national heritage today? This must be considered, otherwise we may end up thinking that heritage is not a somewhat continuous creation and that we can just receive it ready-made.[40] How is it acquired? Once the collections and items of remembrance exist, how do they come to life? The heritage notion proposed by the EU expects the medium using, enjoying and receiving culture to have a new approach, one that regards cultural assets dynamically and not statically. Another question is how much it contributes to the formation of identity. However, it can result in a more creative relation to cultural assets. Thinking about heritage has no broad traditions in Hungary yet, although its components, which can become of current usage according to the new logic, had already existed and the new notion is beginning to spread in professional circles. It is a political intention to try to launch this new approach. In this reversed situation it is still difficult to know what cir-

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39 In a country on the threshold of accession to the EU, it is a peculiar paradox that the country, in the period of post-socialist nation building, wants to adopt a cultural discourse which was developed in countries with a loosening concept of nation.

40 Cf. François Hartog's remarks on the relation of heritage and time, especially on "presentism", Örökség és történelem: az örökség ideje. (*Heritage and history: the time of heritage*) *Regio*, 2000, No. 4., 3–25.

cles will speak the language or perhaps dialect of heritage in culture, and to what degree they really understand it. Will it be merely a basis for reference or a brand-name, which can be used when entering for a tender or will it provide a real intellectual direction? A static and motionless national image differs from the above mentioned intellectual vivacity very much. Can or does a historian, who is not interested in the motionless past but in processes and their schisms, participate in the formation of heritage? It may be more useful if he or she demonstrates what other milestones exist in the country's history beyond the political "state biography", instead of unifying and covering history with the notion of heritage.[41]

Once change has been demonstrated in the issue, the question must be also raised as to what will happen to the discourse and practice connected to it. Will it survive the present period of European unification? At the moment of the attempt to transfer it to Hungary, the Western heritage industry might be reaching the maximum of its performance as consumers or at least sceptic observers could have had enough of nearly everything becoming heritage.[42]

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41 "Millennium és társadalomtörténet" (*Millennium and social history*). Éva Kovács és Attila Melegh talk to Gyula Benda, social historian. *Regio*, 2000, No. 2., 35–36. Social and economic processes "do not at all coincide with the time of important political decisions and dates, which became symbolic. It is another question what is left for the social historian if he wants to participate in this celebratory game in some way. [...] I do not want to rhyme with "a thousand years" and write about the social history of the thousand years, because probably we must think in different stages". In his lecture *History and Heritage*, held on 6 November 2000 at the Central European University, Keith Thomas (the author of *Religion and the Decline of Magic*, and *Man and the Natural World. Changing Attitudes in England*, and who at present also participates in British heritage protection) discussed whether a heritage-type thinking, which reconstructs the past according to the requirements of the present, conformed to history writing, which theoretically studies it for its own sake. In the end his answer was affirmative but with the condition that "heritage" cannot avoid the unpleasant conflicts and cataclysms in history, while "history" can utilise the popularity of heritage while insisting on its own professional criteria.

42 At a conference of Collegium Budapest, held in January 2000, several lecturers referred to the problem, which was already an empirical fact in western countries. Erdősi, Péter: "Feljegyzések az örökség diskurzusáról. Két konferencia tanulságai" (*Notes on the discourse of heritage. The lessons of two conferences*), *Regio*, 2000, No. 1., 269, 273. Papers are published in Szegedy-Maszák, Mihály (ed.): *National Heritage – National Canon*. Budapest: Collegium Budapest, 2001. On her thoughts emerging from a talk with Sally Humphrey, who organised the conference, see the article by Babarczy, Eszter: "Vidámabb múltat tessék vágni! A nemzeti örökségről". (*Make a happier past, please. On national heritage*) *Magyar Narancs*, (*http://mancs.hu/legfrissebb.tdp?azon=0008publ*). The author thinks that "the heritage industry does not face a real hedonistic consumer culture in Hungary", and asks about "what we should add to this whole inherited Hungarian culture history to make it

For the time being we cannot say at all that total "museumification" has taken place in practice in Hungary, but theoretical confusion may result in that. Will "heritage" in Hungary be a component or framework of phenomena, which exist independently of trends like country image, cultural tourism and identity making? Or may another notion take over the role of "heritage", which arranges cultural life in another way, which cannot yet be seen? Will there be a new paradigm that we will start to adopt again? If there will be, how will we use our experience gained in the name of "heritage"?

into national heritage". She regards the lack of "consensus on continuity" as the obstacle to the formation of national heritage. Concerning continuity, cf. the works of Hartog, who recognises the schism between present and past as a precondition of heritage formation. Zsolt K. Horváth explains "the national memory's change into patrimonial self-consciousness" in the French case with three schisms (the failure of the official history of opposition after De Gaulle's resignation; the effect of modernisation on the agricultural society; the sobering of the French Left): "Elképzelt múlt, felidézett jövő. Három séta az „örökség" erdejében" (*Imagined Past, Recalled Future. Three Walks in the Woods of "Heritage"*), op. cit., 181–187. It would be worth analysing the roots of the heritage movement in each country.