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# Interconceptualizing Europe and Peace: Identity Building Under the European Heritage Label

*Katja Mäkinen*

Peace was a key aim in the European integration process after World War II. The present situation in Europe, I argue, also requires us to pay more attention to peace. Near the EU's borders, there is war in Ukraine and Syria, causing fear of war in some of the closest member states. In many member states, new nationalism and right-wing populism are gaining support and creating hostility, particularly against immigrants and in the context of immigration policy. At the EU's borders, refugees die on their dangerous journeys. Member and other states as well as people heading to the EU countries and those already staying in them have certain expectations about "opening" or "closing" the EU borders. Finally, among other "founding ideas" of the EU, peace has become topical in a new way as a Euro-sceptic and anti-EU atmosphere has been growing at least since the financial crisis in 2008, as Britain has decided to exit the

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Union, and as the legitimacy of EU is strongly questioned. All this provides more than sufficient motivation to reflect on the meanings given to peace today in light of the history of Europe and its integration.

Cultural heritage, its definition now including elements like values, political ideas and systems, linguistic diversity, and remembering past events, is often mentioned as a building block of “European identity” in key documents from different EU institutions (Declaration on European Identity 1973; Treaty on European Union 1992; Treaty of Lisbon 2007). These documents use it to construct European identity through an invented common past. One way of doing this is through “founding stories”—or constitutive stories (Ringmar 1996) or founding myths (Lähdesmäki 2018). The narrative of EU integration as a peace process can be seen as the founding story of the EU. It started during integration’s intensification phase after WWII, when the key aim was to prevent new wars by binding European countries—notably France and Germany—together. The idea that peace and reconciliation are at the core of European integration, and thus a fundamental element of the EU community, is repeated still today. With this “European peace narrative”, the EU is represented as an actor willing and able to safeguard peace. Focusing on the European Heritage Label (EHL), a central instrument in the EU’s cultural-heritage policy (see also Kaasik-Krogerus and Turunen, in this volume), this chapter investigates how the European peace narrative is told through the EHL sites, and how peace is used in attempts to build a collective identity for the EU and Europe (i.e. the EU and its member states). Simultaneously, it also pays attention to war in the EHL context, since peace heritage includes war heritage.

By appealing to the idea of cultural heritage and by framing it as European—through the EHL discussed in this chapter, as well as through other cultural-heritage initiatives, such as the European Heritage Days, Europeana, and the Europa Nostra Awards—the EU adopts a strategy typically used in nation-building processes (about nation building, see Hobsbawm and Ranger 1983; Smith 1991; Harrison 2013, 96–97) and represents itself as a state-like actor, thus aiming to strengthen its legitimacy. As an EU action, the EHL can contribute to the idea of a common past that implies that there has “always” been cooperation across state borders and that the “roots” of EU integration are located deep in the past. A teleological narrative of history is thus constructed, and the history of Europe and the EU is represented as a unified continuum. This is problematic, both in the national and

European contexts, as the assumption of continuity essentializes memory (Passerini 2011, 49). Instead of presenting history as a unilinear process and the EU as a “natural” outcome of this history, any discussions about the past should pay attention to its discontinuities and ruptures. Such an approach would enable dissonant interpretations to emerge without excluding those who do not identify with the “dominant” story.

The EHL was launched as an intergovernmental scheme in 2006 and turned into an official EU action in 2011. It is not a funding scheme, but being awarded the EHL is expected to improve the image of the sites and create cooperation among them. Since 2013, the EC has awarded 38 sites with the EHL. The action has been given two general aims: “(a) strengthening European citizens’ sense of belonging to the Union, in particular that of young people, based on shared values and elements of European history and cultural heritage, as well as an appreciation of national and regional diversity; (b) strengthening intercultural dialogue” (European Parliament 2011, 3, Article 3). The aims given for the EHL sites follow these general objectives and include “highlighting their European significance [and] raising European citizens’ awareness of their common cultural heritage” (European Parliament 2011, 3, Article 3). As such, the EHL, like many other EU actions, is also used as an instrument in the identity-building attempts of the EU. The assumption of citizens’ “common cultural heritage” is an explicit attempt to construct a common identity for the EU through the notion of cultural heritage. Phrases such as “European citizens’ sense of belonging to the Union”, “shared values and elements of European history and cultural heritage” and “European significance”, highlighted throughout the official EHL documents, contribute to this too.

Since the “European significance” of heritage is strongly emphasized and explicitly discussed as the justification for the EHL selections (European Parliament 2011), this chapter discusses how “peace” and “Europe” are conceptualized together and how these interconceptualizations are used to produce “European identity” in the empirical material I collected about the EHL. I analyse official EHL documents as well as websites of the EHL sites using a conceptual approach that focuses on the uses, meanings, and articulations of the concept of peace, particularly investigating the links made between peace and Europe.

I first introduce the research material and my conceptual approach to analysing it. Then, to introduce my theoretical framework, I discuss how notions of past, memory, and heritage can be seen as political.

After that I briefly sketch out the roles “peace” has played in the history of European integration. The analysis section then explores how peace is discussed in the empirical material related to the EHL. I divide the ways of peace is discussed in four thematic categories: peace treaties, institutions, practices, and symbols. Finally, I sum up how peace and Europe are conceptualized together and what conclusions can be drawn from those interconceptualizations regarding the EU’s identity building.

## MATERIAL AND METHODOLOGICAL APPROACH

The selection of the EHL sites is based on applications by local heritage actors, first preselected by national panels and finally selected by a European panel of heritage experts appointed at the EU level. The research material for this chapter firstly includes panel reports produced during the EHL selection process during the first three selection rounds, in 2013, 2014, and 2015. The panel reports explicate the panel’s justifications for its selections, and the European Commission then awards the label. Each site is described on one page in the reports. Among these site descriptions, there are nine in which peace is explicitly mentioned. I chose to perform a closer analysis of those descriptions. They discuss the following sites: Abbey of Cluny (France), Camp Westerbork (Hooghalen, Netherlands), Peace Palace (The Hague, Netherlands), European District of Strasbourg (France), The 3 May 1791 Constitution in Warsaw (Poland), Mundaneum (Mons, Belgium), The Pan-European Picnic Park in Sopron (Hungary), Robert Schuman House (Scy-Chazelles, France), and the Sites of the Peace of Westphalia in Germany (Münster and Osnabrück). In addition, I included two sites in the description of which peace is not mentioned but which are thematically linked to war: Franja Partisan Hospital (Cerkno, Slovenia) and WWI Eastern Front Cemetery No. 123 (Luzna-Putski, Poland). This chapter’s analysis focuses on these EHL sites where peace and war play a role.

The EHL was monitored in 2016, and the report written by the monitoring panel is also included in the research material. Finally, in addition to the four panel and monitoring reports, the material also includes the websites of the eleven selected sites.

As a part of the EU’s cultural-heritage policy, the EHL documents are here understood as part of an “authorized heritage discourse” (AHD; see also Kaasik-Krogerus, Lähdesmäki, and Turunen in this volume): linguistic practices that work “to construct a sense of what heritage is – and is not” and “structure and frame different heritage experiences and acts

of remembering and commemoration” (Smith 2006, 6, 11). They construct “not only the idea of heritage but also its practices” (ibid., 12), and may be used for various purposes and for both maintaining and changing states of affairs. The producers of AHD include professionals and experts in heritage conservation, preservation, and management. AHD also includes power relations in terms of “who have the ability or authority to ‘speak’ about or ‘for’ heritage... and [...] who do not” (ibid.). Crucially, within the AHD, ideas of cultural heritage can be used in identity making (ibid., 10–13). The AHD related to the EHL thus provides interesting empirical material to analyse how “European identity” is constructed.

Both identity and cultural heritage are produced through language and concepts that are used to make interpretations about the past, “us” and “others” (Burke 1962; Connolly 1989, 1992; Anderson 1999; Smith 2006). At different times, the idea of a European identity has been linguistically constructed in different ways through various elements such as traditions, histories, and myths (Serfaty 1992; Ahrweiler 1993; García 1993; Delanty 1995). If “Europe does not have an essence beyond one which is shaped by language”, as Bo Stråth (2010a, 14) argues, the idea of the European identity needs to be investigated through textual materials and linguistic approaches. The identity constructions related to Europe are in this chapter thus explored by paying attention to key concepts used in the selected EHL materials, particularly that of peace.

This conceptual approach understands concepts as constructed in debates, constantly changing and contested, and therefore political. According to this perspective, concepts are always contingent and controversial in their use, meaning, content, range of reference, and normative colour (Wiesner et al. 2018). Through this approach, the chapter seeks to study the politics of the concept of peace by investigating how peace is used and constructed in the context of producing the idea of a European identity. It explores the complexities and controversies related to the conceptual relations between Europe, peace, identity, and cultural heritage in the EHL context.

This theoretical and methodological perspective is inspired by the conceptual-historical approach, familiar from political science and history. It offers heuristic tools for understanding the interrelations of political, institutional, and social changes, and for grasping changes to the meaning of concepts (Ball and Pocock 1988; Kosselleck 1996, 65; Palonen 1997, 64; Skinner 1999, 60). As concepts not only describe reality but also produce it, changing interpretations of concepts both

influence and indicate institutional, political, and social changes. The related controversies are hence situated at the intersections of empirical changes and changes in meaning (Koselleck 1996, 61, 65). For instance, the changing interpretation of the concept of peace had a significant influence on the empirical process of integration after WWII (Stråth 2010b, 391–396), which I will discuss after sketching my theoretical framework.

### THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK: POLITICS OF PAST, MEMORY, AND HERITAGE

Memory, heritage, and identity are often discussed together, as a cluster (Waterton and Smith 2009; Kisić 2016; Delanty 2017). The term “memory complex” (Macdonald 2013), for example, refers to the close entanglement of memory, heritage, and identity. This cluster and the understanding that it is constructed through discursive practices forms the heuristic framework for the analysis in this chapter (see the Introduction to this volume). The perspectives of the politics of the past and the politics of memory provide inspiration for investigating the uses of peace in identity building within the EHL context. These perspectives share the idea that the past is contested (e.g. Stråth 2000; Hodgkin and Radstone 2003). These contestations concern the interpretations and meanings attached to the past and questions around who is entitled to produce these interpretations and meanings, and which of them will gain the dominant position. The practices of history and memory are not only about the past but also about the present, and the relations between past and present are complex (ibid.). The relation between memory and its representations is mutually constitutive (Hodgkin and Radstone 2003, 14). Heritage materials and practices are not merely channels through which memories are represented, but the representations themselves, such as the EHL sites discussed here, form memories too.

Which aspects of the past are chosen to be remembered and retold, and which are left in silence and oblivion, is determined through a complex political process: the field of memory can be a battlefield (Stråth 2000, 22; Passerini 2003). Official EU discourse frequently appeals to the past, and WWII and Europe’s past totalitarian regimes both have a permanent place in it, but other aspects of Europe’s difficult past, such as colonialism, are usually not discussed (Pakier and Stråth 2010; see Turunen, in this volume). Yet “dark” (Clarke et al. 2017) or “difficult”

heritage (Macdonald 2016) is also used in collective identity-building processes in various ways.

Different modes of remembering imply different ways of perceiving and using the past. Anna Cento Bull and Hans Lauge Hansen (2016) suggest an “agonistic” remembering as an alternative to “antagonistic” and “cosmopolitan” modes of remembering. Agonistic remembering, according to them, is reflexive and dialogic, taking into consideration the past’s contexts, agencies, and emotions. Unlike antagonistic remembering, which makes clear oppositions between “us” and “others”, agonistic remembering is multiperspectivist. Unlike cosmopolitan remembering, which emphasizes reconciliation and may depoliticize history, it acknowledges struggles and controversies. As such, it allows for exposing the constructive and dissonant nature of both heritage and identities (Cento Bull and Hansen 2016).

The heritage associated with peace is necessarily contested, as peace always has war or conflict on its flipside. Similarly, the narrative of the EU as a peace project takes as its point of departure a highly controversial and serious conflict, WWII, yet according to this narrative, it was European integration that delivered peace. However, it is not only the heritage that is related to controversial topics that should be considered dissonant: any heritage is thoroughly dissonant, because it is a social construct constantly created and shaped by various actors according to their different political, economic, and social interests. It is dissonant because it is about utilizing selected aspects of the past to design scenarios for the future based on the concerns of the present (e.g. Turnbridge and Ashworth 1996; Graham et al. 2000; Smith 2006; Graham and Howarth 2008; Harrison 2013). As such, cultural heritage inherently includes “political process of negotiation, mediation and regulation of identities, conflicts and power relations” (Kisić 2016, 57). The term “heritage dissonance” (Kisić 2016) highlights this intrinsic contestedness. Using cultural heritage in identity building is hence a conflictual process inclined to produce various borders and exclusions that are always already embedded in identity-construction processes themselves.

Governing heritage dissonance is entwined with preventing, mediating, and resolving conflicts, Kisić (2016, 271) claims in her study about heritage, conflict, and peacebuilding. Inclusive heritage discourse, suggested by Kisić (2016), would allow for a dynamic and pluralist understanding of the past. It provides space for heritage dissonance: different memories, interpretations of the past, and meanings given to heritage.



Such a heritage discourse relates heritage “to understandings and memories as practiced by diverse social groups, recognizing their active agency choices and responsibility in making and using heritage” (ibid., 281). In the context of (post-)conflict or difficult heritage, inclusive heritage discourse enables using dissonance for dialogue and intercultural mediation. Such a discourse actually has the potential to promote intercultural dialogue, a key aim of the EHL.

### THE CONCEPT OF PEACE IN EUROPEAN INTEGRATION

The idea of a European confederation was already conceptually linked with peace in the eighteenth century (Stråth 2010a, 29). Earlier, too, “Europe” as an entity was connected with attempts to create peace through political, economic, and cultural cooperation (Heffernan 1998, 95). Yet as an element of the integration and of the European identity under construction, peace has been given contradictory meanings (e.g. Heffernan 1998; Orluc 2010; Stråth 2010b). After both world wars, there was a brief “dream of a pacifist Europe” but soon afterwards a conceptual change occurred: the idea of a pacifist peace was absorbed by the rhetoric of armed peace (Stråth 2010a, 19). After WWII, this conceptual change took place in the context of the Cold War (Stråth 2010b, 391). The Western camp was looking for a way to make West Germany economically strong and rearmed without posing a threat to the rest of Western Europe, and the idea of the European Coal and Steel Community was developed as a solution (ibid., 393). The purpose was to pool the production of the raw materials significant for warfare so that “any war between France and Germany becomes not merely unthinkable, but materially impossible” (Schuman Declaration 1950). The conceptual shift regarding peace thus had remarkable implications for the process of European integration.

The concept of peace also played a role in the conceptual struggle of what to call the emerging “unidentified political object” (Delors 2001, 7). In the post-war years, the “European project” was called “co-operation”, “unification”, and “integration”. In this conceptual struggle, peace was conceptually linked to the latter. The eventual winner of the struggle, “integration” connoted a promise of preventing war and promoting peace through the intensification of communication, trade, and other economic and political networks (Stråth 2010b, 395).

Peace is mentioned at the very beginning of the Schuman Declaration (1950), a prominent post-war statement in the process of integration: “World peace cannot be safeguarded without the making of creative efforts proportionate to the dangers which threaten it. [...] this proposal will lead to the realization of the first concrete foundation of a European federation indispensable to the preservation of peace”. The same goes for the treaties of Paris (1951) and Rome (1957) respectively establishing the European Coal and Steel Community and the European Economic Community. Indeed, peace, reconciliation, and solidarity were central values in the starting phase of integration (e.g. Laffan 2004). Claudia Wiesner (2008, 114–117) includes peace in the legitimating ideas, together with a constitutional tradition, peaceful foreign and security policy, borders, and a social model related to welfare-state traditions, that can be derived from the history of the European integration and might be used to make up the EU’s identity.

Peace is seen as important for the EU in the more recent treaties too, though these no longer discuss it as a fundamental issue. In the Treaty of Maastricht establishing the EU, peace is mentioned at the beginning—and attached to identity—but only in the context of a common foreign, security, and defence policy. These policies are seen to strengthen “the European identity and its independence in order to promote peace, security and progress in Europe and in the world” (Treaty on European Union 1992, 1). In the Treaty of Lisbon (2007, 11), peace is mentioned as one of the aims of the Union, together with promoting the values of the Union and the well being of its peoples. It is listed among other aims such as security, sustainable development, solidarity, mutual respect among peoples, free and fair trade, elimination of poverty, human rights and the rights of the child, and observing and developing international law, including the United Nations Charter. In 2012, the EU was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize. It can be seen as a recognition of the European peace narrative but, in light of the relative decrease in significance of the concept of peace in the treaties, one wonders whether it refers more to the earlier phases of the narrative than to the EU’s current peace efforts.

The narrative of European integration as a peace process can be interpreted as an attempt to create a “political heritage” for the integrating collective. According to Delanty (2010, 9), “the constitutional and democratic state, human rights and the integrity of human person,

social solidarities, civil society and the critical reason associated with modern thought” are “products of the European political and cultural heritage”. Peace is often mentioned in this kind of list enumerating the perceived social/political/civilizational characteristics of Europe. Here, I do not make a sharp distinction between political and cultural heritage: issues related to political systems and ideas are part of cultural heritage, and cultural heritage, in turn, is always political due to its constructed, plural, changing, and contested essence. Peace is a great example of the entanglements of the political and cultural dimensions of heritage.

### INTERCONCEPTUALIZATIONS OF EUROPE AND PEACE IN THE EHL SITES

While peace is often discussed as a general and abstract value, in the EHL context it is pinpointed to concrete places. This is manifested in the monitoring panel’s report that connects the Nobel Peace Prize and the EHL sites.

In 2012, the Nobel Peace Prize was awarded to the EU. Some European Heritage Label sites remind us of battlefields and destructive periods, and of our struggles for peace. Examples are: the sites of the Peace of Westphalia and the Peace Palace, World War I East Front Cemetery No 123, Camp Westerbork and Franja Partisan hospital. (Panel Report on Monitoring 2016, 40)

After referring to the Nobel Peace Prize, some of the EHL sites are linked both to battles and destruction and to “our” efforts related to peace. The first-person plural pronoun is frequently used in EU documents. It refers to the EU, with the assumption that both the speakers and the audiences of the texts belong to it. It is a way to construct the EU as “our” community, but this type of top-down “we-speak” may also exclude some people. Hence, mentioning “our struggles for peace” is an attempt to construct the EU as “our” peacebuilding community, as well as to convince the readers that the EU is doing something for peace and that these efforts are supported by the speakers and the audiences. The quality or sufficiency of these efforts is not problematized.

The meanings attached to peace in the EHL discourses analysed here can be divided in four thematic categories: peace treaties, institutions,

practices, and symbols. These meanings can be understood as different aspects of peace-related heritage that constitute a “memory complex” (Macdonald 2013). Memory complex as a concept draws attention to how heritage is always constructed through various practices, effects, and materializations, as well as human and non-human and conceptual and physical elements, and how different elements attached to heritage can constitute complex assemblages. As such, it combines the tangible and intangible aspects of heritage. It can be conceived as “the memory-heritage-identity complex” (ibid., 5), and an analysis of the various meanings given to peace in the EHL discourse can hence shed light on the ways of peace is used in identity construction.

### *Peace Treaties and Conventions*

Some of the EHL sites focus on peace treaties. The sites of the Peace of Westphalia in Germany include the towns Münster and Osnabrück. The cores of the site are the town halls of both cities, where the Peace of Westphalia (1648) was negotiated. The treaty marked both the end of the Thirty-Year War, which involved several European countries, and that of the Eighty-Year War between the Netherlands and Spain. The central ideas attached to the treaty in the panel report are agreeing to peace through diplomatic negotiations instead of force, accepting religious tolerance as the basis of international relations, and securing sovereign rights for peripheral states. According to the panel report, the effects of the treaties are still present in international law and relations today (Panel Report 2014, 9).

The site itself is given a European frame. On the city of Münster’s website (Peace of Westphalia 2018), the cities of Münster and Osnabrück are associated with “the new European order” and its “principle of tolerance through dialogue”. According to Osnabrück’s website (Friedenstadt 2018), the peace of Westphalia developed something entirely new: the European idea, which included seeking a general peace order to promote trade and cultural exchange in Europe. The hope for peace as formulated in the peace treaty became, according to the website, a model for subsequent conferences on peace, security, and cooperation in Europe. The idea of Europe has indeed been connected to the desire to avoid war through international cooperation. Yet the ways of trying to avoid war—and organize Europe—have largely been based on the balance of power, which was a core objective of the Treaty

of Westphalia (Heffernan 1998, 92–94). In the doctrine of the balance of power, the idea of peace remains vague, as the balance between competing states is more central, resulting in dissonant interpretations of peace and its heritagization.

On the Osnabrück website, the European, local, and regional is intertwined, and the local is represented *as* European. The introductory text about the reception of the EHL starts with a question bringing together Osnabrück and Europe: “What has the Townhall of Osnabrück to do with the united Europe of the 21<sup>st</sup> century?” (Kulturerbe Siegel 2018). As an answer, it is emphasized that Osnabrück is “a European community” in which “the European idea still plays a specific role today and the awareness of young people of the European identity becomes stronger”, echoing the official EHL objectives. Osnabrück’s cultural activities and its participation in transborder associations such as the Euregio are also presented as fostering the process of European unification. The heritage related to the peace treaty is used for identity building at the local level, and critical reflection on the national-socialist past is seen as a building block in Osnabrück’s profile as a peace town as well (Erinnerungskultur 2018). On the Website of Münster, the Münster town hall is depicted as a central place for residents and visitors (Peace of Westphalia 2018). Nevertheless, though both of them associate it with the Peace of Westphalia, their interpretations may differ between and among the two groups.

The Peace Palace in The Hague in the Netherlands commemorates the conventions signed during the peace conferences of 1899 and 1907. These conventions were multilateral treaties that include the Convention for the Pacific Settlement of International Disputes, as well as laws and regulations for the conduct of warfare and for war crimes. Even though these peace conferences and conventions included countries outside Europe, the European dimension of the Peace Palace is clearly emphasized in the panel report (2013, 5) and in the monitoring report (2016, 22): the Peace Palace highlights “the significance of Europe’s efforts in the complex and long-term process of building and strengthening peace and justice”. In the monitoring report (*ibid.*), the site is given the task “to further strengthen the important message of peace as a core value of the European Union”, and to emphasize “peace as a result of the common willingness for cooperation and as a shared European value”. The wish to settle international conflicts with the help

of law and justice is also given long and “European” roots on the website of the Peace Palace itself (Vredespaleis 2018): it “can be traced back to European history and traditions”. This exemplifies the European peace narrative as going beyond the EU. According to this narrative, solving conflicts peacefully is deeply embedded in “European history and tradition”, and the Peace Palace continues this narrative. (It is of course equally possible to claim that it was wars that were central to “European history and tradition”.) The EU does not have anything to do with the Peace Palace, but by awarding the EHL, the EU seeks to join in this narrative, thereby supporting the idea of European integration as a peace process.

### *Peace Institutions*

On their websites, some of the sites present themselves as homes to present-day peace institutions. The Peace Palace houses the International Court of Justice and the Permanent Court of Arbitration. Regarding the sites of the Peace of Westphalia, many trans-regional peace organizations have their offices in Osnabrück (Friedenstadt 2018). In Münster, a peace prize is given every other year. In the prize’s documentation, peace is explicitly linked to European integration, as it is given to individuals in the realm of politics or economy who have specifically been involved in the European integration, yet it does not explain why the winner of the prize needs to act in the field of European integration, rather than in any other field. The goals of the prize are also defined in relation to Europe: the prize aims to contribute to the discussion about the internal structure of Europe and the coexistence of people in Europe (Preis des westphälischen Friedens 2018). The site is thereby attached to the European peace narrative even though the site itself refers to times in which the narrative had not yet been invented. Conceptualizations like this link peace to European integration and represent that integration as a peace process.

Two EHL sites that focus directly on EU integration, the European District of Strasbourg and the Robert Schuman house, are also linked with peace. The institutions located in the European district of Strasbourg include the Council of Europe, the European Court of Human Rights, and the European Parliament. They were all, according to the panel report, established to maintain peace. A list of values

including human rights, democracy, and the rule of law is attached to the institutions too.

Bilingual Strasbourg has a symbolic location in the centre of Europe. After the Second World War, European institutions created for maintaining peace were housed in an area which became the European district of Strasbourg. These institutions are the drivers of European consolidation; they are central to the strengthening of human rights and to the defence of democratic values and the rule of law. (Panel Report 2015, 12)

Strasbourg admittedly has a “symbolic location” on the border between France and Germany as one of the key battlefields in World Wars I and II. Hence it is at the core of the European peace narrative about the EU integration, tying together France and Germany to prevent wars. The Robert Schuman house, the home of one of the founding figures of European integration, is also located close to the French–German border. It is said to contribute to the promotion of “the values of peace and international cooperation” (Panel Report 2014, 17). Through these kinds of sites, and particularly by conceptualizing them as places of peace, the panel reports seek to illustrate that peace has been a central value of the integration process since its inception. However, the conceptions of the EU as an institution of peace and integration as a peace process have also been questioned (see Turunen, in this volume).

### *Peace Practices*

On the websites of several EHL sites, peace is also understood in terms of practical activities. In Münster, an event series called “Münster 1648: Dialogues for Peace” takes place yearly. According to the city’s website, “Münster uses its history to take responsibility for the present and the future in issues related to the crisis areas of the present day and to develop new methods for conflict mediation, conflict resolution, and securing peace” (Dialogue zum Frieden 2018). The past related to peace is thus used to find ways of dealing with present-day crises and building peace. Osnabrück organizes peace talks too (Friedensgespräche 2018).

As a form of “peace work”, Osnabrück has established an exchange of young “town ambassadors” with its partner towns in other countries. It has also adopted a “scheme of fostering the peace culture” as a result of an “active peace-political work”. “Peace culture” includes

a wide range of events and activities related to topics from tolerance and interculturality to ecological responsibility and equality between rich and poor countries (Friedenstadt 2018). It is also committed to a “culture of remembrance” commemorating the victims of national socialism (Erinnerungskultur 2018). Through these practices, the cities’ peace heritage is connected to the conflicts and controversies of today.

The idea of peace represented by the Mundaneum, an archive and documentation centre in Mons, Belgium, is practical: peace should be sought through culture, dialogue, and sharing knowledge at the European and international level by the means of bibliographic enquiry (Panel Report 2015, 12). The peace practices of the Mundaneum include exhibitions and peace classes. Ongoing peace practices are highlighted in the report’s description of the Peace Palace in The Hague as well: “every single day, people are working to establish peace here, in Europe and the rest of the world” (Panel Report 2013, 5). The Palace also serves as a venue for events in international law and politics.

These practices can be seen as ways to use the past in the present and make it feel more concrete and “alive”. It remains unclear, however, whether they provide space for different interpretations of the heritage itself. Based on Kisić’s (2016) analysis of heritage interventions in a post-conflict situation, we know that heritage practices can provide an arena to tackle a difficult past if they acknowledge heritage dissonance and enable an inclusive heritage discourse. There are but few hints to such heritage practices in the EHL documents. Camp Westerbork plans “to adapt the discourse to a larger variety of cultural and historic backgrounds” (Panel Report 2013, 8), which can be seen as a reference to heritage dissonance. The plan of the European District to “make a participatory documentary about Europe in Strasbourg” (Panel Report 2015, 14) implies the notion of an inclusive heritage discourse and a participatory approach to cultural heritage. Such practices may bring together authorized and inclusive heritage discourses, but not necessarily overcome the power imbalance between the two.

### *Peace Symbols*

In the process of constructing identities, values are often utilized. It is common for official EU documents to list values and depict these as characteristic of the EU and Europe (terms often used synonymously) (see also Lähdesmäki, in this volume). Such lists typically include peace.



The EHL documents make a close link between peace—and other values—and the EHL sites: “The sites tell stories about Europe but with a focus on values, peace, democracy, human rights...” (Panel Report on Monitoring 2016, 36). According to the report (*ibid.*, 5), “Even outside of Europe, the sites are strong symbols of peace, the rule of law, welfare and democracy”. The material sites are here tightly interlinked with abstract values and principles. However, the sites not only “tell stories” about values, peace, and other principles, but also ones explicitly “about Europe” (*ibid.*, 36; see Turunen, in this volume). These examples show how the official EU discourse can simultaneously represent the EHL sites as symbols of peace and of the idea of Europe. Both peace and Europe are abstract and complex ideas, and while material sites admittedly can narrativize some aspects of them, they also inevitably simplify them. No site can symbolize all the interpretations different actors have of Europe and of peace. This indicates the key struggle, inherent to heritage, about whose stories are told and whose are not.

The category of peace symbols in the EHL material overlaps with the other three categories. Thus, the panel report highlights the symbolic dimension of the Peace Palace in addition to the peace practices, conventions, and institutions it hosts (2013, 5). And the monitoring report states: “The Peace Palace is thus an icon and a symbol of Peace and Justice in Europe and in the world, a ‘Peace Shrine’” (2016, 22). Similarly, the 3 May 1791 Constitution in Warsaw, Poland, the first democratically adopted constitution in Europe, by the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth, is described as “a symbol of democratic and peaceful transformation of a political system”, which is explicitly defined as “part of the European ideals” (Panel Report on Monitoring 2016, 19; Panel Report 2014, 11).

The sites of the Peace of Westphalia are also seen as “a symbol of peace achieved through international negotiations” (Panel Report on Monitoring 2016, 18). The Pan-European Picnic Park in Sopron, Hungary, commemorates a peaceful freedom protest in 1989 when the border between Hungary and Austria was symbolically opened for a few hours. This event—which in a very concrete and practical way started as a mass picnic—“has become a symbol of breaking down the fence system between countries”, according to the Panel Report (2015, 5). The site is described as “a strong symbol of the end of the Cold War and of a borderless Europe” (Panel Report 2014, 20) and thereby linked to the freedom of mobility, a core idea of European integration.

Mobility is here—like in many other EU documents—celebrated as a great achievement of integration, without taking into account its controversiality and exclusive nature (see the chapters by Kaasik-Krogerus, Progljo, and Trakilović, in this volume). The Pan-European Picnic Park exemplifies how the panel reports conceptualize the “European significance” of several sites through cross-border mobility, cooperation, and the cross-border context of the site.

The Mundaneum is described as “a landmark in the intellectual and social fabric of Europe”, the holdings of which “trace the evolution of values now fundamental to Europe, in particular peace through culture” (Panel Report 2015, 12). At the Mundaneum’s website (Expositions 2018), peace and Europe are interconceptualized: “the project of European integration [...] and the project of the founders of Mundaneum [are] born from the same ideal: peace through culture”. The Mundaneum is located in the context of the European integration, and both are said to share the idea of peace.

Sites referring to war are also used as symbols of peace in the EHL context. Camp Westerbork in Hooghalen, the Netherlands, is a site with a multilayered history. Before, during, and after WWII, it was used as a camp for Jewish refugees from Central Europe, as a deportation camp for Jews and Sinti and Roma gypsies, as a prison for Nazis awaiting trial after the war, as temporary accommodation for the Dutch coming back from the West Indies at the end of the colonization period, and as a refugee camp for South Moluccans until the end of 1960s. This site demonstrates that mobility, a core idea of European integration unproblematically highlighted in the EU documents, is anything but unequivocal, and thus that any heritage related to it is deeply dissonant.

The discussions about Camp Westerbork indicate that “dark” (Clarke et al. 2017) or “difficult” heritage (Macdonald 2016), which explicitly refer to troubling pasts, can also be utilized to construct the idea of the European identity. In the official EHL documents, the site with its supposedly “shared European memories” is represented as a nexus of peace, memory, and the EU.

The site supports the “Culture of Peace and Reconciliation” through shared European memories. Its layered history and relevance is an invitation to reflect on the values on which the European Union is built. The European significance is clearly articulated in the site’s narrative. (Panel Report on Monitoring 2016, 25; Panel Report 2013, 8)

Inviting the readers to reflect on the values can be interpreted as an attempt for an inclusive heritage discourse (Kisić 2016) in which the process of European integration could be contemplated from the perspective of its core values. However, it is not specified who can be involved, what those values are, or whether they can be questioned. In another panel report (2015, 5), Camp Westerbork is connected to the current migration situation, saying that sites like this “can help contextualise recent events from the perspective of European history and may help European citizens to deepen their understanding”. The EU’s external border policies and migration discussions currently do raise questions about the values of the EU, and these questions could indeed be contemplated in light of the contested histories related to sites such as Camp Westerbork. Such sites have the potential to increase understanding about various types of mobility as a historical phenomenon and stimulate empathy towards refugees, but this potential is hardly explicitly discussed in the EHL materials analysed here. Nor are the stories of migrants themselves referred to in the official EHL documents, which shows how demarcations and exclusions are always embedded in identity-building processes.

Two other EHL sites that focus specifically on war are also used as symbols of peace. Franja Partisan Hospital in Cerkno, Slovenia, was built by the Yugoslav underground army in the territories occupied by the Nazi Germany. Operating in secrecy during WWII, it is described as “an outstanding symbol of human fortitude and medical care, of solidarity and companionship in hardship, between staff and wounded, from various nationalities and from the enemy” (Panel Report 2014, 16). The WWI Eastern Front Cemetery No. 123 in Luzna—Putki, Poland, was established near the Eastern Front battlefields between the Austro-Hungarian and German armies and the Russian army. The cemetery is described as “a tangible reminder of World War I [and] the heritage of the Eastern Front” (Panel Report 2015, 13). Both sites are introduced with emphasis on the coexistence of national, linguistic, religious, and military diversity. Emphasizing the diversity of population groups related to the sites is a way to construct their “European significance” (Lähdesmäki and Mäkinen 2019). Both of them are represented as symbols of peace through concepts like solidarity, companionship, equal respect, and reconciliation. The dissonant heritage of the camp, the hospital, and the cemetery is thus used for telling the European peace narrative.

*European Peace Narrative: Harmonious and Dissonant*

Heritage related to peace is inherently “dark” (Clarke et al. 2017) and “difficult” (Macdonald 2016), as it includes war heritage. This “dissonant heritage” (Turnbridge and Ashworth 1996; Graham et al. 2000) of peace is inevitably present in the EHL sites. For instance, the sites of the Peace of Westphalia represent the end of war, and the Pan-European Picnic Park symbolizes the end of the Cold War. The Peace Palace and European District of Strasbourg focus on the preventing and regulating war, and the Mundaneum and Robert Schuman House refer to preventing war through practices. Moreover, war is the explicit topic of Camp Westerbork, Franja Partisan Hospital, and the WWI Eastern Front Cemetery No. 123. In the AHD of the EHL, they are also used to help construct the European peace narrative by describing them with concepts referring to reconciliation and solidarity. This demonstrates how the peace narrative mobilizes “dark heritage” and uses as a “soft power” to construct the identity of the EU as a promotor of peace (Clarke et al. 2017).

Following the clear goal defined for the EHL to foster belonging to Europe, the official EHL documents emphasize the European significance of the sites: the European spatial layer is given a dominant position, even though it would be equally meaningful to discuss both peace and heritage in other spatial frameworks or from more non-spatial perspectives. The websites of some of the sites themselves do mention the local, regional, national, global, and individual scales. In both the EHL and the sites’ documentation, though, these other scales are often narrated as European. The intrinsic multiscale of the EHL sites refers to the dissonance of cultural heritage through the implicit controversies between the scales: actors at local, regional and national level may interpret the same past events in different or even contradictory ways. Explicitly, however, the European peace narrative constructed in the EHL documents primarily appears as a harmonious one. The more local stories and representations only appear as building blocks within the idea of European identity. When peace is conceptually framed as European and pinpointed to the EHL sites, both the individual EHL sites and the entirety of Europe—or at least the EU and its member states—are depicted as spaces of peace. In the EHL materials explored here, Europe is created as a discursive and imaginary space, but the concrete sites labelled European are also used to produce it as a material space that can

be experienced and felt by visitors (see Lähdesmäki 2016; Passerini 2010, 60–61). Peace heritage is thereby constituted as a “memory complex” (Macdonald 2013) combining tangible and intangible aspects of heritage. The spatialities of the peace narrative are thus employed in the identity construction.

Through the lists of values and principles attached to the sites of “European significance”, Europe is depicted as the cradle and protector of those values and principles. This demonstrates the use of values in producing the European identity (Laffan 2004, 75–76). And value as a concept is indeed used repeatedly in the EHL discourse, often prefaced with the adjectives “European” or “common”. As such, the EHL discourse does not include “a critical and reflexive distance to value production, where the values are under constant negotiation and transformation”, which, according to Stråth (2010a, 18) could alternatively be seen as an indication of “a European culture” rather than the idea of universal values.

Another common way of producing a European identity, the appropriation of the concept of Europe (Laffan 2004, 75–76), is also constantly employed in the EHL discourse analysed here. The concept of Europe is frequently used and equated with the EU and its member states. It is used as an attribute of the most variegated matters—such as memories, history, ideals, values, and peacebuilding efforts—in order to conceptually produce the “European significance” of the sites. “European” thus appears as a natural and fitting attribute of any sphere of life. A ritualistic repetition of this European dimension is typical for the EHL texts and for EU discourse in general, and can be interpreted as a banal way of producing identity (Billig 1995). It produces the image of Europe as something familiar and close, and as a relevant framework for citizens’ activities and identifications. Simultaneously, it excludes those who do not share the same conceptualizations, for instance the same interpretations of history.

The multilayered histories of the EHL sites are controversial and contested, and so are the present activities of the EU, but in the AHD of the EU, the cultural heritage related to peace is depicted as harmonious and consensual. By referring to this peace-related heritage and discussing it in an uncontroversial manner with a strong European framing, the EU positions itself in a long chain of previous peace projects as a relevant agent in peacebuilding. This harmonious and Eurocentric narrative represents the EU as something very positive and easy to identify with.

At the same time, it does not leave room for the complexity and multivocality of heritage, and may hamper a nuanced discussion of the past and its significance for the present.

Few would be against peace, which makes it an especially viable tool for identity construction. However, despite all its positive meanings, there is no actual agreement about the concept of peace. For example, in Europe peace has primarily meant attempts to avoid and regulate wars within the doctrine of the balance of power (Heffernan 1998). Hence, even though “Europe” has been constructed out of the idea of peace, Europe’s wars have just as much shaped the idea of what a “European identity” may be (*ibid.*). The EHL sites’ dissonant and multilayered histories might enable discussion on the different interpretations of peace, the past, and the current conflicts, as well as their role in identity construction. In the official EHL documents, these questions are mostly not discussed, even though dialogue is stated as a key goal in the EHL Action and EU policies more broadly. Instead, some EHL sites, such as the Mundaneum, the Peace Palace, and the Sites of the Peace of Westphalia, do take up some of these questions on their websites and link the peace heritage to current contestations.

Hence, there are different types of AHD (Smith 2006) at play in the context of the EHL. The discourse in the official EHL documents frequently interconceptualizes peace and Europe, offers consensual interpretations of the past, smooths over conflicts, and constructs a harmonious narrative combining peace and Europe, thus narrowing the space for debate on the past and its relation to the present. This harmonious narrative resembles the cosmopolitan mode of remembering criticized by Cento Bull and Hansen (2016): it depoliticizes the past and does not acknowledge the contestedness and politicality of cultural heritage. Such a harmonious narrative deviates from the dissent and conflict that also underlies the European integration process (e.g. Stråth 2000, 2010a). On the other hand, the websites of the sites themselves sometimes do provide alternative or more complex narratives by mentioning several spatial frameworks, by linking peace with the current concerns, or by discussing both past and present conflicts. They thus make space for a more agonistic way of remembering, as supported by Cento Bull and Hansen (2016), and hence provide inspiration for thinking about the idea of European identity and heritage in terms of dissent.

However, neither the official documents nor the EHL sites’ websites provide a discursive space that is “thought provoking, de-naturalizing,

non-dogmatic and include multi-vocal narratives” (Kisić 2016, 281) or can articulate the idea of heritage dissonance in the European peace narrative. At different times in Europe, democracy was one of the key concepts within utopias of peace, but its relationship to peace has always been complex (Stråth 2016, 421). I argue that if the EHL seeks to use heritage sites to tell its narrative of peace, it be more sustainable if democracy was not only mentioned as a value but also concretely enabled in the discussions around heritage by opening space for inclusive and participatory meaning-making and decision-making concerning heritage in particular. For example, the websites of the EHL and the individual sites could be used as interactive platforms for participation and dialogue, allowing visitors and locals to upload their stories, both texts and images, about the heritage.

### CONCLUSIONS: BUILDING IDENTITY THROUGH A EUROPEAN PEACE HERITAGE

In the EHL documents and on the websites of the EHL sites, peace is depicted as one of the indispensable, core elements of the EU. The frequent use of the concept of peace reproduces the European peace narrative related to European integration since its inception. All the meanings given to peace are located in a European framework. This supports the peace narrative and contributes to the idea of a European peace heritage. The peace narrative is used as a constitutive story (Ringmar 1996) to legitimize the EU, and shape its identity as a stable and justifiable actor.

Peace is given various meanings in the official EHL documents and on the websites of the EHL sites themselves: The Peace Palace, the Sites of the Peace of Westphalia, and the Abbey of Cluny focus on peace treaties and negotiations, and the 3 May 1791 Constitution on the peaceful transformation of a political system. The Peace Palace and the European District of Strasbourg represent institutions for promoting peace. The Mundaneum is about promoting peace through practices and institutions related to knowledge, and the Robert Schuman House refers to the idea of creating peace through practices and institutions of economic integration. The Pan-European Picnic Park commemorates a peaceful freedom protest for breaking down the fence system between the Western and Soviet blocks. Camp Westerbork, Franja Partisan Hospital, and the WWI Eastern Front Cemetery No. 123 reflect a history of war and conflict and are used as symbols of peace and reconciliation.

A range of different aspects of peace is attached to the EHL sites in various combinations. Material, concrete, physical, and practical aspects of cultural heritage are present in sites commemorating peace treaties, negotiations, and institutions, as well as practices related to peace or war. Abstract and imagined aspects of peace heritage are to some extent present in all the sites discussed here, as many of the sites are explicitly conceptualized as symbols of peace. For instance, the symbolic dimensions of the Peace Palace, the 3 May 1791 Constitution, the sites of the Peace of Westphalia, and the Pan-European Picnic Park are highlighted alongside their more concrete aspects. Tangible and intangible dimensions of heritage are thus intertwined in the EHL sites, and all the sites together form a “memory complex” (Macdonald 2013) related to peace. The coexistence of several elements—such as values, institutions, and concrete, practical activity—in one site can be seen as an indication of heritage dissonance, which, according to Kisić (2016, 57), refers not only to contradictions but also to unusual combinations embedded in heritage.

Despite this conceptual variation, the EHL discourse’s dominant mode of presenting the past is as harmonious and consensual, omitting contradictions, which is typical for an AHD (Smith 2006; see also the chapter by Lähdesmäki, in this volume). Remembering war and discussing peace heritage could be used as an invitation to act towards building peace. In the EHL materials explored here, such an invitation is not clear, although peace to some extent is linked to present-day conflicts. Instead of providing space for dissonant interpretations, Europe and peace are interconceptualized in an unquestioned way.

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