BOOK REVIEWS

Heritage Discourses in Europe. Responding to Migration, Mobility, and Cultural Identities in the Twenty-First Century

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Europe is no stranger to migration. For centuries, Europeans have moved across the continent for work or land or adventure, in search of political or religious freedom - or simply to escape the law back 'home'. Immigrants have come to Europe from elsewhere, particularly to those nations that colonised their home countries, usually in the hope of a better life. However, in the last two decades or so, inward migration has increased dramatically as refugees have arrived from war-torn, impoverished or unstable countries – Syria, Iraq and Afghanistan, Sudan, Zimbabwe and the Democratic Republic of Congo and many, many others. Governments, particularly those of a right wing persuasion, and some of their citizens, have viewed this influx with alarm and dubbed it the 'refugee crisis.' The authors of this volume are – rightly – careful to use parenthesis for the word 'crisis'.

With a few notable exceptions, European countries have not responded well to the influx of asylum seekers, and xenophobia, anti-immigration rhetoric and government-sanctioned inhumanity are rife. The authors of this book are, however, concerned with those refugees already settled in Europe and the issues they present – around individual loss and disorientation, around integration and acceptance, around what constitutes cultural appropriation and around the need to appreciate the vibrant cultural contribution that so many immigrants make to their 'host' countries. The eight essays in this short volume address some of these topics.

In 'Narratives of Resilient Heritage and the "Capacity to Aspire" during Displacement' Anna Catalani describes how the refugees she interviewed feel their heritage has to 'die' before being recreated and redefined as they settle into their new lives and the ambivalent feelings this generates – loss and longing for home as well as a desperate need to 'fit in' to their new environment. She relies heavily on a series of interviews with Syrians who have been resettled in the UK. While her analysis is fair as far as it goes, it might have been useful to give actual examples, and also to analyse what 'redefining' and 'recreating' can mean. In my home city of Leicester, for example, which has a large population of migrants from the Indian sub-continent, many of whom arrived in the 1970s, traditions and festivals are celebrated with gusto – but in ways which visiting relatives from India apparently find increasingly quaint and old-fashioned. It would also have been interesting to know more about those aspects of ICH which migrants

are able to retain – food, religious observance, family relationships – and the ways in which some refugees attempt to introduce these to their European neighbours with gifts and invitations. Having worked with the asylum seeker/refugee community in Leicester for many years I have been the recipient of numerous such offerings.

Alison Jeffers describes a haunting and powerful theatrical performance at Manchester Museum which formed part of *Journeys Festival International 2017*. The refugee performers were in charge of the event and chose to introduce the audience to various ideas about persecution and torture, and also – through the person of an angry Egyptian princess – to the concept of stolen heritage, as well as to songs and stories from their various cultures. The performance took place in the galleries alongside artefacts from all over the globe – and at least one performer chose to make her contribution alongside a case full of origami birds, symbolising peace, from Hiroshima, ignoring the life jacket chosen by the museum staff as a symbol of refugee journeys.

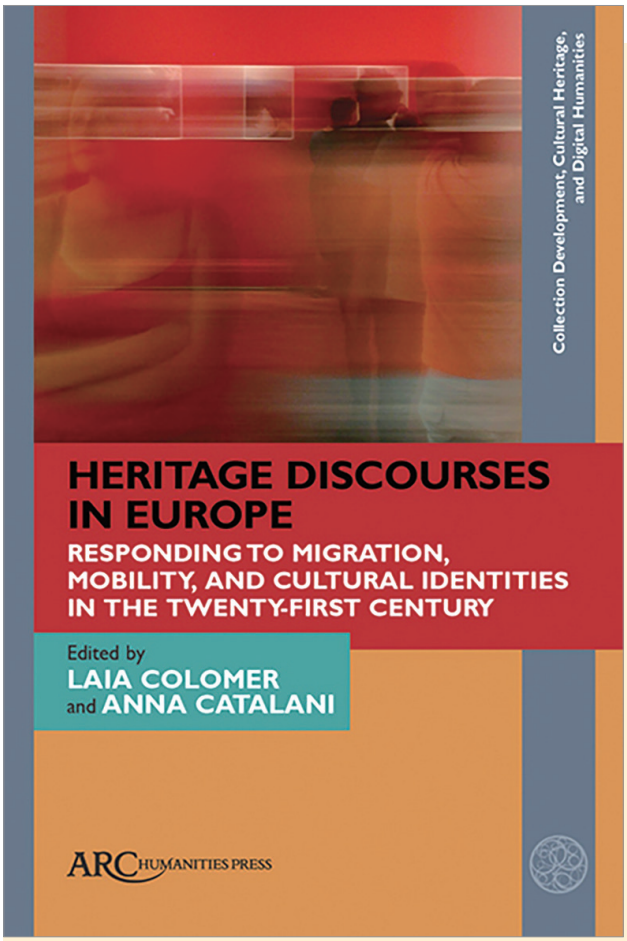
Alexandra Bounia wrote about 'Museums, Activism, and the "Ethics of Care": Two Museum

Exhibitions on the Refugee "Crisis" in Greece in 2016,' describing a pop-up poster exhibition in Athens, and an exhibition of photographs in Thessaloniki. Both concentrated on the Greek response to the refugees in their midst; the posters depicted everyday items individual Greeks had given to refugees, the photographs documented the migrants' journeys from the Greek islands to the border and sought to elicit sympathy and understanding from the local population.

While museum performances and exhibitions are a fairly traditional response to immigration issues, the approach to integration chosen by the 'Heritage Schools of Barcelona' is anything but. Maria Feliu Torruella, Paloma Gonzales Marcen and Clara Masriera Esquerra describe how the 'heritage schools', founded in the early 20th century in what is now inner city Barcelona, are today attended by large numbers of immigrant children. The schools are mindful of their heritage, both architectural and in the form of documents and childrens' work from the schools' earliest days, and they encourage their pupils – both primary and secondary – to learn about it, discovering plaques commemorating the schools' foundation, examining plans and comparing their own work and school experience with that of earlier students. The idea is that, wherever the pupils were born, wherever their families come from, they are all now a part of their schools' history and, by extension, of the history of their neighbourhood.

Cristina Clopot wrote about 'Heritage Processes following Relocation: The Russian Old Believers of Romania'. The 'Old Believers' left Russia in the 17th century because they disapproved of the modernisation of the Russian Orthodox Church and wanted to continue their traditional form of worship. They exhibited what she calls 'resistance identity'. Nonetheless over the course of 300 years things have changed in subtle ways, despite the migrants' best efforts to follow the old traditions.

Laia Colomer Solsona looks at 'Doing Things/Things Doing', the meaningful items migrants carry with them – a stone, a teapot, a picture – and the value they have in the recreation of a sense of 'home'. Finally, Amanda Brandellero looks at 'superdiversity' in 'Staging Musical



Heritage in Europe through Continuity and Change.' In many ways this is the most hopeful essay in the book, examining how musicians from different traditions can influence, inform and inspire each other, and how the sounds they produce are of far greater importance than the traditions of the various individual performers. Sophia Labadi takes up the theme in the final essay or 'Afterword', describing superdiversity as 'The Way Forward'.

The chapters are meticulously referenced, and while referencing is of course a Good Thing, in this case the amount of reference material is almost overwhelming – three and four pages of bibliography and notes for essays few of which exceed ten pages. Out of 121 pages of text, the notes, index, abstracts and author biographies actually account for 31 of them. With such short sections, I would question whether abstracts are strictly necessary, especially as they are placed, rather curiously, at the *end* of each chapter. I would also have preferred more illustrations, though the quality of those included is not particularly high - but that particular fault probably lies with the publisher rather than the authors.

There is a great deal more that could be written – both positive and negative – about policies and initiatives which encourage recent immigrants and Europeans to interact with and influence each other. It is to be hoped that this short volume is the start of a much longer conversation.