My Goodness, My Heritage[1]! Constructing Good Heritage in the Irish Economic Crisis

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Abstract

In 2008, the Republic of Ireland entered a severe financial crisis partly as a part of the global economic crisis. Since then, it has seen large raises in income taxes and cuts in state spending on health, welfare, education and on heritage, which has suffered relatively large cuts. This implies a need for rethinking choices and prioritisations to cope with the changing circumstances. Across Europe, the effects of the crisis on heritage, or the whole cultural sector, have yet mostly been highlighted in general or supposed terms rather than empirically analysed. But what actually happens to how heritage is conceptualised in times of crisis? Inspired by Critical Discourse Analysis, this paper explores representation of and argumentation for heritage in Irish state heritage policies pre and post the recession 2008. Much concerns regarding heritage management are discursively shaped. Policies, stating the authorised viewpoint, are thus key in the construction of heritage and its values in society. Recently, research has highlighted a shift towards more instrumentality in cultural policy due to wider societal changes. A crisis could influence such development. The analysis departs from an often-stated notion of heritage as a part of the Irish national recovery, but what does that imply? Focus is therefore put on how different representations of heritage and its values are present, argued for and compete in a situation with increasing competition regarding relevance and support. The paper shows how heritage matters are refocused, streamlined and packaged as productive, good-for-all, unproblematic and decomplexified in order to be perceived and valued as part of the national recovery. This includes privileging certain instrumental values, foremost economic, by means of specificity, space and quantification, while heritage's contribution to social life, education or health, although often mentioned, are downplayed by being expressed in much more vague terms.

Keywords: Global economic crisis, Ireland, heritage, representation, instrumentality, critical discourse analysis, Cultural policy

Introduction

From 1993 to 2007 the Republic of Ireland experienced an economic boom with expanding employment and rising average living standards. The boom collapsed in 2008 as Ireland entered a severe financial crisis in part due to the global economic crisis. Since then, Ireland has seen austerity actions such as large raises in income taxes and cuts in state spending on health, welfare, infrastructure and education (Drudy & Collins 2011; Kirby & Murphy 2011; O'Callaghan et al. 2015). Cuts in public budgets for culture, including heritage, has been a crisis response in many countries across Europe (Inkei 2010), as in Ireland where the area of heritage has suffered substantial cuts. These changed circumstances create a need for alternative choice making and prioritisation (Fabiani 2014). That said, heritage is always involved in politically charged and selective processes where certain sites and objects are recognised by the state, or other actors, as heritage that should be protected and where certain practices, uses and values are deemed as important and worthy of support (Graham et al. 2000). Across Europe, the effects of the crisis on heritage, or the whole cultural sector, have been highlighted in quite general or supposed terms, or as something that needs to be explored, with a few exceptions (see Inkei 2010; Schlanger & Aitchison 2010; Meade 2011; Fabiani 2014). That an economic crisis affects governments and their finances, and therefore also state heritage work, is fairly straightforward. Yet, it is important to pin down the different ways that this is acted out and analyse the various implications of the crisis, be they material, practical or conceptual. This paper analyses Irish state heritage policies pre and post 2008 in order to explore the presence and influence of the crisis in the ways heritage is represented, valued and argued for. These policies are part of the construction of heritage in society. As Smith (2006) argues, it is the very activities of governing, the ways heritage management frames and works with what it recognises as heritage, that produce that heritage and its values. Public policies constitute the official discourse of the state (Codd 1988). Heritage policies are blueprints that fixate values, ideas and strategies regarding state heritage work. They communicate and justify the authorised view of heritage to politicians and other decision makers as well as to wider society. In a society marked by a crisis, the pressure and need for prioritisation and relevance may be very high. Policies become important arguments in this.

In the last decades, research has highlighted a shift towards more instrumentality within cultural policy, meaning that culture is used as a means for ends in other areas (Bennett 1995; Gray 2002; Belfiore 2004). This development is part of a wider set of political, social and economic changes that have been taking place in the Western world in the last 40 years (Gray 2007). An economic crisis may be an event, or stressor to use Wilson's word (2000), which could change policy and bring about an increase or alteration of such an instrumentalisation. This paper explores this in regard to heritage policies in the aftermath of the recession in Ire-

land by examining how these documents, in how they represent and argue for heritage, produce or reinforce certain goals and ideas regarding heritage and its values in society, while back-grounding others. The paper outsets from the often-made assumption, and anticipation, that heritage is a part of the national recovery of Ireland. The minister for Arts, Heritage and the Gaeltacht[2] during 2011-2014, Jimmy Deenihan, has repeatedly highlighted the key role of heritage sector in society, both socially and financially, and particularly in providing employment and tourism in the national economic recovery (Deenihan 2011). The failures in sectors like property and banking have strengthened the idea of culture as important in the economic recovery and in promoting a positive image of Ireland (Meade 2011). However, some parts or values of heritage might become more important to work with than others. In regards to the national recovery, there is a need to 'strategically plan not just heritage activities and heritage service delivery but the very activities and delivery that maximise, in a joined-up way, heritage experiences and social and economic benefits' (Deenihan 2011:2). Can this approach also be seen in heritage policy and what does it really imply for the understanding of heritage? This paper analyses the representation of and argumentation for heritage in times of crisis in order to understand how such a situation can affect the ways heritage is regarded in society. Focus is therefore put on how different representations of heritage and its values are used, argued for and compete in a situation of increasing competition regarding state funding and relevance. It will illuminate how certain ways of valuing and conceptualising heritage are accentuated while others loose ground. The paper argues that in order to survive the crisis, the state heritage sector recognises a need to be understood as part of the national recovery agenda, and for that, heritage need to be packaged as productive, positive and non-problematic. Now, pushing positive dimensions of heritage is what you would expect from such policies, regardless of the crisis. However, how this is done and what it implies is relevant to examine rather than take for granted.

Heritage Values, Instrumentality and Policy

Put plainly, the term heritage refers to something inherited from the past. However, much academic discourse on heritage emphasis that heritage is to be understood as a process of using and relating to the past in the present, rather than just objects from the past (Smith 2006; Harvey 2008). Thus, heritage can be described as 'the part of the past which we select in the present for contemporary use, be they economic, cultural, political or social' (Graham et al. 2000:17). Accordingly, it is closely connected to selective processes in which objects and sites become resources of today (Ashworth et al. 2007). However, it should be noted that the empirical material of this paper refers to heritage as it is defined in the Irish Heritage Act, which includes: 'monuments, archaeological objects, heritage objects such as art and industrial works, documents and genealogical records, architectur-

al heritage, flora, fauna, wildlife habitats, landscapes, seascapes, wrecks, geology, heritage gardens, parks and inland waterways' (Heritage Council 2014). The material often separates the built/cultural heritage from the natural, and this analysis focus on the former.

Valuing Heritage

One starting point when discussing the ways heritage is represented and argued for is the range of values that are commonly given to heritage in society. The development of a value-led heritage approach has in recent years grown strong in Western heritage management (Australia ICOMOS 1999; Mason 2002; Clark 2010). Mason's (2002) value typology is one way to categorise such values. However, these values are not really distinct and exclusive, they overlap and interact. Several different categorisations would be possible. The main groups in the typology are *Socio-cultural values* and *Economic values*. Socio-cultural values are broadly defined as 'values attached to an object, building, or place because it holds meaning for people or social groups due to its age, beauty, artistry, or association with a significant person or event or (otherwise) contributes to processes of cultural affiliation.' (Mason 2002:11). This broad category encompasses 1) Historical values, which include educational value and artistic value, 2) Cultural/symbolical values, which are 'used to build cultural affiliation in the present' (Mason 2002:11) and include political values, craft values and values that stimulate ethnic-group identity, 3) Social values, which refer to enabling and facilitating social connections but also place attachment and the social cohesion and community identity that might come from that, 4) Religious values and 5) Aesthetic values, which encompass sensory experiences. The economic values of heritage comprise Market values and Non-market values. Mason's typology shares many values identified in *The Burra Charter: The Australia ICOMOS Charter for Places of Cultural Significance* (Australia ICOMOS 1979, revised 1999). This was the first formal charter to put forward a value-based typology for heritage and highlight the role of significance and it has influenced national and international heritage charters since then (Clark 2010; Waterton et al. 2006). However, contrary to Masons typology, economic values are minimised in the Burra Charter, but they are highlighted in another influential document, the *Council of Europe Framework Convention on the Value of Heritage for Society*, also called the 'Faro Convention' (Council of Europe 2005).

This paper uses Mason's categorisation, although with some simplifications to suit the quite streamlined value descriptions in the policies, to structure how heritage is represented in the empirical material. However, the material also makes references to health value, a dimension that Mason's categorisation does not account for but that is increasingly noted in policy and academia (see for instance Newman's, 2005, discussion on links between museum initiatives and well-being and the conference *Heritage and Healthy Societies* that was organised by the Cen-

ter for Heritage and Society at University of Massachusetts in 2014). Furthermore, Mason's typology does not include intrinsic value as it departs from the idea that all values are socially constructed and depending on their context: they are never simply found or fixed. However, the empirical material makes some references to such value and it will be included in the discussion.

The acknowledgment and weight of these values and which heritage they will be associated with depend on the specific context of the valuation but also on the fundamental conceptualisation of heritage. As Waterton (2010:4) points out, 'Heritage is not a fixed *thing*, but something that is constructed, created, constituted and reflected by discourses'. One of the more dominating and agenda setting discourses on heritage is what Smith (2006) terms the *Authorized Heritage Discourse* (AHD). The AHD emphasises the old, the great, the beautiful, the comfortable, the consensual and iconic parts of the story about the Nation while places, people and traditions that are not associated with the social or economic, and mainly male, elite are mostly ignored. Besides favouring the histories and symbols of certain groups, the AHD privileges the knowledge, valuing and practice of yet another elite, the heritage experts. Furthermore, it understands heritage as inherently good and valuable, 'as it is seen to represent all that is good and important about the past' (Smith 2006:29). This is where its core value lays. The discourse has since long been reflected in much heritage policy and state heritage work in the Western world (Smith 2006).

Policies of Culture and Heritage

Heritage policy is part of the concept of cultural policy. Many studies dealing with cultural policy have explored an increasing instrumentalisation following a growing 'need for arts and cultural policies to demonstrate that they generate a benefit over and above the aesthetic' (Gray 2007:203, see also Bennett 1995; Gray 2002; Belfiore 2004). Vesthiem (1994:65) describes instrumental cultural policy as 'to use cultural ventures and cultural investments as a means or instrument to attain goals in other than cultural areas'. One way of conceptualising this is through Gray's (2002:88) term 'policy attachment'. This is a strategy where cultural policy, or other traditionally 'weak' sectors, attaches itself to other more influential or important agendas or policy concerns. The literature has discussed, and questioned, how culture, and the arts specifically, has been used in wider agendas for urban regeneration (Bailey et al. 2004), remedying social exclusion (Belfiore 2004; Tlili 2008) and community empowerment (Matarasso 1997). Gray (2007) traces the process of shifting emphasis towards instrumentality in cultural policies in many Western countries. It is part of a wider set of political, social and economic changes that have been taking place the last 30-40 years. He finds that the development is dependent upon a combination of specific and general, and endogenous and exogenous factors. The context in which a policy is produced and the particular circumstances that each nation faces as well as a general ideological

reorientation of value (from use-value to exchange-value) and the structural weaknesses of these policy sectors, are all parts of the understanding this development. In the case of Ireland, the economic crisis could arguably be a factor to take into account. Although not conceptualised as automatically leading to policy changes, the literature has identified crises as focusing events (Birkland 1989) or stressors (Wilson 2000) that hold high potential for changing policy. A crisis can open up for organisational reforms, redefinitions of issues and policy inventions when causing 'disruptions of societal routines and expectations' (Boin et al. 2009:82). More specifically, Vestheim (1994) and Belfiore (2004) identify financially harder times with decreased support for public spending as one cause of the development of instrumental cultural policies.

In general, when it comes to heritage policy, much research focuses on the presence of the AHD, problematic power relations between authority/experts and communities and issues of cultural dominance and exclusion in policy and other heritage practices (Smith 2006; Waterton 2010; Mydland & Grahn 2012, among others). Governmental policy on heritage is often guided by the AHD, with its focus on tangible aspects of sites and object, such as architectonic styles and age, and where heritage primary is inherently, rather than instrumentally, good. However, as already noted, the acknowledgement of more instrumental values of heritage has increased in the last decades in the heritage sector and policy-making as well as in academia (see Dümcke & Gnedovsky 2013 for a review). Studies have shown how heritage, especially since the 1980s, has been used as an economic, social or cultural resource in urban regeneration, rural development, place promotion, memory politics and tourism (Graham et al. 2000; Negussie 2004; McManus 2005; Till 2005). There is also a growing literature on the contribution of economic analysis in heritage decision-making and policy (Peacock & Rizzo 2008; Bowitz & Ibenholt 2009). If we look more specifically at research dealing with instrumentality within heritage policy, there are similarities with the larger body of works on cultural policy. Studies have shown how heritage since the 1990s has been drawn into larger social agendas and reframed as a way to work with communities and problems like exclusion (see, for example, Sandell 2003; Pendlebury et al. 2004). These agendas have also been criticised for their vagueness in meaning and problems with implementation as well as showing actual impacts (West & Smith 2005; Lynch & Alberti 2010). For instance, Waterton (2010) questions how calls for social inclusion and more general ideas on multiculturalism and diversity have been worked into heritage policy in the UK. These agendas triggered 'a re-branding of heritage'(Waterton 2010:210) in the UK, although still guided by the AHD and its traditional, exclusive and elitist understanding of heritage. Research has also examined heritage as a tool in Nation building (like Kohl & Fawsett 1996). While the integration of social or national agendas in heritage policy has been critically examined, less analysis has been directed towards scrutinising the economic side of this instrumentality of heritage policy. One interesting study

where state heritage work, AHD and economic development are put together has been done by Pendlebury (2013). He proposes a development of the AHD within the field of conservation-planning in the UK caused by external forces like the influence of broader policy imperatives upon the heritage sector. In this, links between heritage and economic development were stressed as a way for heritage management to compete with and survive 'alongside a panoply of different elite interests' (Pendlebury 2013:724). However, generally, the usage of heritage in tourism and for other economic benefits has been perceived as 'highly suspect and problematic' within the AHD (Smith 2012:392).

Although the use of instrumental forms of cultural policies is suggested to be growing across the world, one should not forget that instrumentality has always been integral to cultural policy (Gibson 2008). However, there can be different kinds of instrumental objectives and it is still important to dig deeper into and explore the (shifting) forms of this and the direction in which it is taking the policies in relation to changes in society. While the conceptualisation and valuation of heritage has been widely discussed in the literature, it has not yet been analysed in relation to the global economic crisis of the late 2000s, an event whose effects on a range of aspects of society worldwide have been occupying researchers since 2008 (Boin et al. 2009; Inkei 2010; Kentikelenis et al. 2011, among many others). The paper addresses this gap and provides insights on possible effects of the crisis on cultural policy. It also considers how a crisis may affect known ways of conceptualising heritage, such as the AHD and heritage as a social or economic resource, and how these reverberate and compete in the argumentation for heritage in this context.

Analysing Policy and Discourse

As Waterton et al. (2006) and Smith (2006) among others have emphasised, much of the concerns regarding heritage management and practices are discursively shaped. One part of this is the ways heritage is constructed in public policy documents, which is what this paper is concerned with. Wilson (2013:15) defines public policies as 'the authoritive statements or actions of government which reflect the decisions, values, or goals of policy makers'. The close relationship between heritage and discourse makes heritage policy neither a simple nor neutral domain where heritage problems and solutions are mapped (Waterton 2010:4). As Bacchi (2000:50) stresses; how certain aspects of society get framed as 'problems' within policies is not innocent and without effect. It influences thinking and possibilities for action. By paying attention to texts and discourse, one can examine how particular issues are dealt with, 'reflecting how economic, social, political and cultural contexts shape both the content and language of policy documents' (Taylor 1997:28). Contexts are crucial for the interpretation of texts, as all texts are pro-

duced and consumed in specific social, cultural, economic and political contexts (Wodak et al. 1999).

Representation and Genre

The paper is influenced by Critical Discourse Analysis. It is underpinned by the idea that how we speak, write and think about the world affect how we act in that world (Fairclough 2003). But there is also a mediation here; texts and discourses are shaped by the world and the world is shaped by texts and discourses (Wodak et al. 1999). The analysis is based on Irish state heritage policy documents produced before and after the recession 2008. These texts are explored regarding their ways of representing and arguing for heritage and its values. Fairclough's (2003) concepts *representation* and *genre* guide this analysis. These are significant parts of how language and its meaning making, what Fairclough refers to as semiosis, influences and is influenced by the social world. Semiosis constitutes genres, which are specific semiotic ways of acting. The analysis of genre pays attention to particular way of manipulating and framing discourse through specific uses of language, with different resources and rhetoric for texturing or communicating, that are associated with particular social activities, like political debates and business plans. However, a text does not necessarily belong to one single genre, it may be a mix of several genres (Fairclough 2003). Semiosis also figures in representation where it creates discourses, which are specific ways of thinking, talking or writing about something, or 'diverse representations of social life' (Fairclough 2012:456). This includes semiotic ways of representing aspects of the physical, social or mental world in the form of representations and assumptions of how things are and have been, but also of how things might, could or should be (Fairclough 2003). The analysed documents do not simply illustrate heritage work and values. Representation is 'the production of meaning through language' (Hall 1997:28). By representing heritage and its values, policies are part of the process of producing as well as communicating ideas regarding what heritage is, how it should be dealt with and why. Importantly, as Timeto (2011:154) suggests, representations are not to be seen as 'passive, however accurate, reflections of an independent reality, but as active constructions and viable, […] contingent processes of knowing'. Representations constitute, sustain, legitimate and transform knowledge and values. They become powerful through processes of naturalisation, by representing something as common sense, true or natural (Fairclough & Wodak 1997). By focusing on genre and representation, the analysis attempts to understand what the texts are doing in operation and move beyond solely paraphrasing their content or seeing them purely in terms of meaning (Waterton et al. 2006:342-343). This includes paying attention to how these two aspects are articulated together, what Fairclough (2012:457) terms an 'interdiscursive' analysis.

Heritage Valuation and the Presence of the Crisis and its Aftermath in Heritage Policies in Ireland

Before diving into the empirical material and analysing genre and representation in policy documents, something will be said about the development of public heritage management in the Republic of Ireland. State heritage management developed quite late in Ireland compared to other European countries. Heritage issues have also been shuffled around a bit within the state organisation. This may be part of why Irish heritage policy has not been researched much in itself. When discussed, it has foremost been in terms of the use/misuse of heritage in tourism policy, strategies and development in Ireland (Phillips & Tubridy 1994; McManus 2005, among others). However, Parkinson et al. (2013) is one exception with a discourse analysis on the state's shifting ideas regarding the historic built environment. This study illustrates how AHD influences heritage policy elites in Ireland but also a dichotomy between this and attempts to move towards a more postmodern, inclusive and multifaceted understanding of heritage. Furthermore, Negussie (2004) has explored value-judgments in built heritage conservation in Ireland and its changing place in legislation and planning system. According to her, Ireland has seen a shift in the valuation of heritage similar to many other western countries. This has meant a broadening of the heritage concept, from a narrow focus on pre-1700 sites and buildings towards including younger and more mundane sites and buildings and inclusion of landscapes (Negussie 2004). However, as also noted by Parkinson et al. (2013), this widening has not really changed the fact that heritage management in Ireland tend to follow the traditional AHD.

It was mainly during the later part of the 1990s, during the economic boom, that the Irish state more strongly started to express commitment to heritage (Cooke 2003; Negussie 2004). Ireland's first formal Heritage Act was introduced in 1995, and a Heritage Council was established as a part of that and the amount of funding for national and local heritage projects increased yearly. However, since 2009, with the economic downturn, this funding trend has suffered a rapid reversal with large cuts in state funding on both local and national levels. In fact, the largest proportional cuts within the state hit the Department of Arts, Heritage and the Gaeltacht (Hardiman & MacCarthaigh 2013:19).

The Documents: Contexts and Genre

The analysis is based on strategic plans of two bodies within the state heritage sector. The first is the governmental department with the overall responsibility for Ireland's heritage. This responsibility has shifted several times and the strategic plans analysed here are from three different departments: the Department of Arts, Heritage, Gaeltacht and the Islands (DAHGI, plan for 2002-2007), the Department of the Environment, Heritage and Local Government (DEHL, plan for 2008-

2010) and the now existing Department of Arts, Heritage and the Gaeltacht (DAHG, plan for 2011-2014). The second body is the Heritage Council (HC), a state funded, statutory body established under the Heritage Act who supports local projects and advises government on policy. Their strategic plans are for 2001-2005, 2007-2011 and 2012-2016. The contexts in which the plans are written are obviously different. The plans of the Heritage Council for 2012-2016 and of DAHG for 2011-2014 are post-recession plans; the other four were produced before the recession. Before analysing representations within these policies, they will be examined regarding rhetoric and layout, which are important parts of the construction of arguments, in order to explore possible changes in genre as responses to the crisis.

The Documents of the Heritage Council

The Heritage Council's strategic plan for 2001-2005 is short, unspecific and came about in times of 'remarkable economic development' (HC 2001:3). It aims to 'protect and enhance the richness, quality and diversity of our national heritage for everyone' (HC 2001:7) through work in key performance areas. The following plan of the Council, for 2007-2011, is much more comprehensive. The vision is to 'work in partnership for the conservation of our national heritage through encouraging its accessibility and enjoyment by everyone' (HC 2007:9). It has a number of strategic themes, similar to the key performance areas of the previous plan; such as raising awareness, appreciation and evidence-based policy advice (HC 2007:14). In the strategic plan for 2012-2016, the Council 'realise the need to contribute to national recovery' (HC 2012:6). Its vision has a new, more instrumental directing; 'that the enduring value of heritage is enjoyed, managed and protected for the vital contribution it makes to our identity, our well-being and our future.' (HC 2012:13). Even more specific instrumental values are given to heritage in the mission statement:

> to engage, educate and advocate to develop a wider understanding of the vital contribution that our heritage makes to our social, environmental and economic well-being. […] And to ensure that the significance of heritage in supporting jobs, as an educational resource and in maintaining the quality of heritage tourism is fully recognised and realised. (HC 2012:13)

The instant focus on the productiveness of heritage sets the Council's plan for 2012-2016 apart from its predecessors. Before defining heritage or the Council's vision, which the previous plans start with, the current plan jumpstarts to setting 16 key objectives of supporting employment, education, awareness and heritage-based tourism.

Departmental Documents

The strategic plan of DAGHI for 2002-2007 is a longer, more detailed account of heritage values and priorities than the following department plans, which include

several sectors. It is divided into strategic themes like placing heritage at the heart of public life, protecting our heritage and promoting heritage awareness and enjoyment (DAHGI 2002:3). The plan of DEHL for 2008-2010 is shorter and less comprehensive. One section out of seven is devoted to (built) heritage, and one high-level target is set; 'To provide an enhanced policy and legislative framework to promote increased public awareness and appreciation of our national built heritage', through strategies like reviewing policies and promoting heritage appreciation and awareness (DEHL 2008:19). The 2011-2014 strategic plan of DAHG sets one high-level goal for heritage. It has a more instrumental tone than earlier years; to 'conserve and manage our unique heritage for the benefit of present and future generations, as a support to economic revival and sustainable employment and in compliance with legal obligations' (DAHG 2011:12). To achieve this, strategies, with a number of outputs, are presented, however most outputs concern the natural heritage. The strategy that is most strongly connected to built heritage takes an economic standpoint; 'to promote greater appreciation and understanding of Ireland's heritage as a valuable amenity for business, farming and tourism and as a means for presenting Ireland as an attractive destination for sustainable inward investment' (DAHG 2011:16).

Argumentation Strategies: On Becoming a Streamlined Business

The analysis suggests some modification of genre. The post-recession plans are much more like business plans, with straightforward arguments compared to the more general and fluffy pre-recession plans. The emphasis of setting goals and outputs, rather than wider strategies, is a way to work with, and show that you work with, something concrete and reachable; goals that can be measured and checked, instead of more fluid and long-sighted efforts. Another strategy to be, or appear, more business like and justified is using statistics and references to reports showing the importance of heritage for employment and tourism. Belfiore (2004:189) terms this 'rituals of verification' when describing the popularity of justifying practices of audit, performance measurement and statistics as forms of official validation within public policy in the UK since the 1980s. This kind of supporting of arguments is vastly employed in the post-recession documents. One of the more cited reports, the consultancy firm Ecorys' *Economic Value of Ireland's Historic Environment* (2012:2) also clearly states; 'A robust economic evidence base is central to substantiating a compelling rationale for the provision of public and private sector funding in the historic environment'.

Pre-recession Representation and Valuation of Heritage

There is Nothing Like Heritage: Core Values of Ireland and Something Beyond Economics

The strategic plan of the Heritage Council for 2001-2005 is unspecific but states that heritage brings values to all daily activities and quality of life. It is something that people should enjoy, understand and be aware of. However, what these values *are* is not specified. Turning to the plan of DAHGI for 2001-2005, heritage deserves 'protection for its intrinsic value' (DAHGI 2001:6). There is a strong focus on protection rather than usage of heritage as most proposed actions are leading towards acts of protection. There is a need to draw up 'strategies for the protection of heritage in key spheres of economic activity and development, including infrastructural and housing development, tourism, and agriculture' (DAHGI 2001:16). This early plan writes about community involvement, but as Waterton (2010) has noted regarding community involvement in the eyes of the AHD, it tends to be a one-way relationship: 'For conservation to succeed it is vital that the local communities are fully aware of the importance of what is being conserved, why it has this importance' (DAHGI 2001:39). The 2007-2011 plan of the Heritage Council has a strong focus on the Nation; heritage is a valuable national asset that has to be protected. Here Mason's (2002) cultural/symbolical values and particularly the political become fore-fronted. Heritage is 'fundamental to our core values and principles as a nation' (HC 2007:2). Furthermore, it is a way to bring economic, social and environmental benefits to all communities in Ireland, but it is also argued that heritage is 'immensely important' with values beyond what can be expressed in purely economic terms (HC 2007:3). It also has what Mason terms aesthetic values and educational values. An entire page describes how heritage links people to their emotions through 'pride and understanding, interest and appreciation, knowledge of our national heritage and enjoyment of the heritage' (HC 2007:8).

Economics and a Challenging Relationship between Heritage Protection and Development

The importance of heritage for the economy takes up a very small part of the pre-recession plans. When expressed it is mostly connected to something else, as in declaring the significance of communicating the 'importance of heritage to Irish society and the national economy […] to as many people in Ireland as possible' (HC 2007:12). Something that would gain importance in the crisis is shown in one high-level target: to provide information on the 'socio-economic value and significance of our heritage' (HC 2007:16), although another target was to 'measure the non-market value of heritage to the general public' (HC 2007:18). Actions for developing alliances with the tourism sector and to examine the impact of tourism

on heritage were also set up. The latter is fairly contrasting, as will be shown, to how the relationship between heritage and tourism is described after the recession.

The 2008-2010 plan of DEHL, written with no crisis in sight, focuses on that heritage needs to be protected and appreciated, and balanced with a continued economic and social development. This is perceived as a challenge, thus implying that heritage management can be problematic for a department involved in local government and planning; 'Protecting and promoting appreciation and awareness of Ireland's rich and unique built heritage assets, while facilitating continued economic and social development, represents a major challenge' (DEHL 2008:7). The plan does not communicate any economic value of heritage; rather it is a key component in shaping cultural and historical identity. Conclusively, pre-recession plans put focus on people, on understanding, appreciation and protection of the past and on the values of heritage for the core values of Ireland as a Nation. Thus, what Mason (2002) refers to as Socio-cultural values like social, political, cultural, aesthetic and educational values are emphasised more than economic values.

Representation and Valuation of Heritage in Times of Crisis

The strategic plans of the Heritage Council of 2007-2011 and of DEHL for 2008-2011 stretch into the crisis but they were produced during boom times. One early indication of the crisis can be found in another document, namely the Heritage Council's annual report from 2008. Here, the changing economic situation is starting to show, as the Council 'now more than ever, must take the lead in championing the multiple values of our national heritage and in maximising the significant contribution heritage makes to the social and economic well-being of the country in general' (HC 2008:4). Contributing to the social and economic well-being of the country is a theme, and an expression, that would become a dominating focus within the discourse on heritage in Ireland in the following years.

On Presenting Many Values and Pushing Some: the Economic Productiveness of Heritage

The post-recession plans of the Heritage Council and DAHG highlight a great deal of values of heritage that we recognise from the typology of Mason (2002), ranging from Socio-cultural values to Economic values. Heritage is an exceptional resource that offers employment, health, identity, a 'sense of place', learning and enjoyment. It contributes vitally to 'our social, environmental and economic well-being' (HC 2012:13). Furthermore, heritage is vital for 'preserving' and 'strengthening' the national identity and helping to promote Ireland's image abroad (DAHG 2011:3, 6, 15). Although a variety of values are given to heritage, the documents push the economic benefits by giving them more space overall, and particularly in initial bullet points of the objectives, and by adding notes on eco-

nomic benefits to sections describing other values. It is done by altering genre and being more specific and explicit, with numbers and descriptions, about how heritage supports economic development in terms of jobs and tourism. Heritage as a resource for social development, education and health is much more vaguely described. The Heritage Council states that heritage 'provides the backbone of our communities and our culture, our tourism and agricultural industries, and stimulates entrepreneurship and innovation in the wider economy' (HC 2012:15). The plan then continues with saying that heritage contributes to a wide range of economic sectors, has a place-making potential and an ability to contribute to urban and rural regeneration.

So, the values given to heritage after the recession are foremost connected to the national economic recovery, as in supporting employment and tourism, although education is also highlighted. This is stated right on the title page of the plan of the Council for 2012-2016; *Heritage: Supporting jobs, education and tourism*. Likewise, DAHG (2011:3) stresses how its work is in line with Central Government's programme for national recovery and its focus on getting 'our people back to work' (Fine Gael and the Labour Party 2011:1). Heritage is clearly a constructive part of society. While heritage in much of the pre-crisis plans was conceptualised as in need of protection *from* economic development, and where conflicts could rise between development and conservation, this is toned down in the current strategic plans. Instead, links between heritage, growth and jobs are strengthened. For instance, the plan of DAHG for 2011-2014 talks about conserving the past *for* continued economic growth. Consequently, conservation and economic growth do not stand as opposites. Rather, the plan highlights that heritage conservation has 'evolved to become a vehicle for achieving broader ends such as urban and rural revitalisation, job creation, cultural stewardship, business incubation and sustainable tourism' (DAHG 2011:15).

Vague Social Values

One aspect of instrumentality in cultural policy that the literature has paid much attention to is the assumed social benefits of culture. The social value of heritage is well noted, in particular in the writings of the Heritage Council. In their strategic plan for 2012-2016 both social and cultural aspects of heritage, e.g. how heritage play vital parts in social and cultural life in Ireland, are stated. The plan also points to how heritage 'shapes contemporary culture and informs Irish imagination in terms of literature, music, design, language, folklore, oral history and the landscape' (HC 2012:15), thus strengthening its attachment to a wider cultural sector. Writings on the importance of public participation are present in all the plans, both pre and post recession, although with some variations regarding who to include and the rationale for this. In the Heritage Council plan for 2012-2016 notions of community and public participation are well used in objectives, goals and strategies. The need for community involvement and dialogues between the

public and professionals is emphasised with references to recent international conventions and developments in heritage management. However, the incentives seem to include more than the public good. It is also a way to find justification and support; 'A disinterested, disengaged public will neither demand nor recognise the best in heritage protection, conservation and management, nor will they enjoy fully the contribution that heritage can make to quality of life.' (HC 2012:5). And in a time of lacking resources, talk about inclusivity, shared ownership and stewardship and community-led approaches for managing heritage (HC 2012:5, 8, 9) could carry economic incentives, as well as social. The plan states that in order to succeed, the Council is dependent on working with volunteers, other authorities and organisations (HC 2012:17, 36-37). To work in partnership is not new for the Council, but the need for this is stressed more than in earlier plans. Notable here is that the social values and contributions are seldom explained, in stark contrast to the more explicit economic ones. Furthermore, heritage, as a resource in social development, is often in the end reduced to employment and thus tightly tied to economic development; 'In particular, we realise the need to contribute to national recovery and to demonstrate how heritage can be a resource for social and economic development. There are several ways through which heritage can play a greater role in the creation of sustainable employment' (HC 2012:16).

There is something regarding how the plans approach inclusivity and diversity that appears different between boom and crisis. In the current plans of both Council and Department there is neither any mentioning of the diversities of society nor of heritage and its values. This can be contrasted with the strategic plan of the Heritage Council for 2007-2011, which took its departure in that 'in today's multicultural and multifaceted society, heritage has a wider range of meanings and values than before' (HC 2007:8). Furthermore, the Council wanted to 'continue to foster the increased significance and value attached to heritage across all levels of our multicultural society' (HC 2007:9). It is also highlighted that 'the whole cultural and social spectrum in Ireland (along with the Irish diaspora throughout the world) has the right to appreciate and enjoy Ireland's national heritage' (HC 2007:12). Also worth noting is that the aim of the Council for 2001-2005 was 'To promote a concept of a diverse heritage which is inclusive of all aspects of our built, natural and cultural heritage, and inclusive of everyone on the island' (HC 2001:4). This acknowledgement of diversities in society and heritage has now been overshadowed by jobs, education and tourism. The only reference to diversities, except biodiversity, in the post-recession plans, is not in any objectives or strategies but in describing the commemoration of the foundation of the Free Irish state; 'we must remember the presence of diaspora and new communities in Ireland and ensure that our heritage is inclusive and open to all' (HC 2012:12). However, while the material shows a fading focus on diversity and inclusion, which is a noteworthy alteration, Waterton (2010), West and Smith (2005), Bel-

fiore (2004) and others remind us that calls for social inclusion in cultural policy have often been closer to empty words or project of assimilation than actively working with respecting and including diversity.

Heritage is Good For You: The Elusiveness of Heritage Benefits for Health and Education

Apart from heritage being good for the economic and social well-being of Ireland, two other values stand out, in particular in the writings of the Heritage Council. The first one is education or awareness, which is a part of the Council's key objectives. It is a value that nevertheless becomes quite abstract and assumed. It is seldom articulated what actually could be learnt from heritage, with one exception: 'It is through our heritage that we, as Irish people, experience the history of Ireland itself and find understanding in how we have developed as a nation' (DAHG 2011:15). Secondly, heritage contributes to identity, well-being and health (HC 2012:20) and as a part of this, the Council sees the need to 'Lead the debate on the contribution of heritage to physical and mental health and well-being' (HC 2012:23). However, in contrast to the economic benefits of heritage, its positive effect on health, as with the social and educational benefits, is mostly unspecific: 'Heritage attractions such as museums, historic buildings, monuments and parks, as well as our rural and urban landscapes, provide unique resources for learning and recreation, or a break from the stress of everyday life' (HC 2012:20). Religious or aesthetic values of heritage are seldom expressed.

Concluding Discussion

Altered Focus in Heritage: On not Being a Problem

Comparing the documents, alterations of the emphasised values of heritage and processes of 'policy attachments' (Gray 2002) can be discerned. There is a shift from a wide and unspecific valuing of heritage to a valuation mostly based on productiveness and explicit economic and employment benefits linked to agendas of national recovery. Thus, the post-recession argumentation is guided by a shift in focus towards more, but also certain, instrumental values of heritage, providing an example of the instrumentalisation process discussed in the literature (Belfiore 2004; Gray 2007, among others). However, the post-recession documents do represent heritage as comprising of many values, and as an exceptional resource for identity, employment, health, learning and enjoyment. But state heritage management does not have unlimited resources. Choices eventually have to be made on what to support and how to value different values in relation to each other. Here, Hoskins's relational axiology becomes relevant. It recognises that values always operate in comparison to something else, thus 'any identification of value involves its removal from something else' (Hoskins 2015:2). Although many val-

ues are presented as important, they are not valued the same. The texts privilege the economic benefits, which is particularly clear when analysing genre and representation together. How heritage supports economic development in terms of jobs and tourism is given most space and specific descriptions. This fore-fronting of the economic benefits and the use of quantitative and sharp business-language creates a strong argument while the contribution of heritage in terms of what Mason (2002) identifies as Socio-cultural values remains vague. This may be explained by difficulties in measuring Socio-cultural impact (Belfiore 2004) but also by a recognised need of being part of the national economic recovery.

In the pre-recession policies heritage, much along the AHD, was constructed as immensely and intrinsically important and in need of protection from developments in society. In contrast, current policies promote a streamlined heritage concept that is positive and constructive, and heritage issues as non-problematic and integrated with development and other aspects of society. It is a part of and not apart from the national recovery. Bacchi (2000) has argued for the importance of exploring how certain aspects of society are framed as 'problems' within policies, as this is never innocent and without effects. This analysis illuminates a downsizing of the 'problems' of heritage; from heritage as in need of protection to heritage framed as a solution to a wide range of other issues, from unemployment to vitalising individual and social life. Thus, it is not really problematic at all. The policies are partly rebranding heritage, giving it 'the power to *do* good, rather than simply *be* good' (Waterton 2010:209). Parallels can be drawn to what Røyseng (2008:10-11) talks of as 'ritual cultural policy' in which culture 'possess magical powers that transforms and heals'. This all good, good for all side of heritage is also reinforced by the very little space given to possible complexities and diversities of contemporary society and of heritage values. Quite far from the idea that values are relational, the policies construct all values and uses of heritage as corresponding and adding value to each other and to everyone. There are no discrepancies between heritage that supports economy and heritage that supports other values. This is how representations can work, they 'selectively represents, simplifies, condenses' economic, political, social and cultural realities, and in this they include certain aspects while disregarding others (Fairclough 2012:463). The focus on all-good, non-conflicting and productive heritage is much more apparent in crisis times than during the boom. There seems to be little room for complexity in times of crisis. Nonetheless, as much research has shown, we need to be cautious regarding the often-presumed goodness and benefits of culture for society in policy. This is relevant to take into consideration for both pre and post recession plans.

The crisis appears to be what Wilson (2000) refers to as a *stressor* that is modifying, as in refocusing, state policy on heritage. However, it is problematic to pin all these changes to the crisis. There is nothing new about ascribing economic or social values to heritage. The trend of increasing instrumentalisation of Western

cultural policy started before 2008. Perhaps the development since the recession could be understood as a somewhat pushed, and economically flavoured by the nature of the crisis, walk down an avenue that was already partly known and chosen. It is also too early to assert how persistent and pervasive these changes are. Policies are part of the official heritage practice, but analysing such documents cannot provide the whole picture. Other empirical materials, like interviews with state employees, might tell a different story that is worth exploring.

An Extension of the Authorised Heritage Discourse?

While these policies tend to resonate with the traditional AHD, the increasing focus given to the economic benefits of heritage and a streamlined heritage concept open up for something else. These shifts are strategic ways of justifying and strengthening the notion of heritage as an important and unproblematic part of society and the national recovery; a tactical response to keep in line with the power in a tough competitive situation. One way of understanding this is through Pendlebury's (2013) idea about an extension of the AHD to include contemporary elites other than heritage authority, in addition to the social and economic elites of the past. Thus, the crisis may influence the experts, who decide the values and uses of heritage, to adhere to the agendas of the political and economic elites of the central government (although this elite is not really new to the AHD as it is their past equivalences it favours). There could also be an opening for others, following an increasing reliance on non-state actors such as community groups. How this may work in regard to the traditional focus on expert-based knowledge and power within official heritage management is something to explore further.

Wider Implications and Questions

In these policies, which constitute the official discourse of the state (Codd 1988), heritage moves towards becoming, to revise Graham et al. (2000:17), the parts of the past which we select in the present for contemporary use, primary economic and maybe to some degree, when not conflicting: cultural, political or social. It emerges as an all-good (in both being the good of the past and in doing good in the present) and unproblematic dimension of society. The documents are arguments *for* heritage but they are also simplifications of the complexities of the phenomenon. These arguments have been streamlined along with the crisis, but they are not equal simplifications of the meanings of heritage. Rather, they are working in one direction, to simplify, and reinforce, the goodness and productivity of heritage. This is an understanding far from the complexities that many scholars and practitioners would say lay at the very core of the concept, and might not be what the producers of the policy documents intended. These 'strategies of survival' (Belfiore 2004:188) are part of the current situation and the need to fit in and not loose state ground.

It may be that this analysis produces more questions than answers. What does this refocusing mean more practically? These documents are set up to guide the practical work regarding heritage but they also show the authorised way of conceptualising and valuing heritage and thus take part in constructing heritage and its proper management in society (Smith 2006; Waterton 2010). It might be easier to get state support for the types of heritage that correspond, in value and use, to heritage as it is conceptualised in the policies. More effort will probably be put on those sites, or practices, of heritage that are perceived as supporting economic recovery, like getting tourist attention or creating jobs. One important question is what sort of heritage is perceived as best in providing the emphasised values; e.g. which or whose heritage becomes most valuable in times of crisis? When there is a need to show concrete results to demonstrate relevance to wider society, activities or projects that are hard to quantify may become relegated. In a blog note, geographer Hoskins (2013) questions the expectation on heritage to be productive and the bias of 'the positive, ennobling, affirmative and comforting kinds of heritage over the disruptive, upsetting, confusing and awkward bits of the past'. What happens with the parts of the history, and the practices of heritage, that don't fit into the slimmed version of heritage as easy-going, positive and financially beneficial? Can or should all parts of the heritage necessarily produce revenues, social cohesion and physical and mental well-being?

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Notes

[1] This title, and some headings in the paper, is a play on old slogans of the Irish brewing company Guinness ("My Goodness… My Guinness", "Guinness is Good for You" and "There is nothing like a Guinness").

[2] Gaeltacht refers to Irish-speaking regions.

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