

The concept of heritage – A national perspective

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Introduction

The definition of the terms “culture” and “cultural heritage” is subject to profound debate due to the questionable ontological status ascribed to the concept of identities (Jahoda 2012). According to essentialist approaches, the legacy of the past is an inseparable combination of the culture (language, myths, and symbolism) that has been accumulated in the group and the “blood ties” that have formed among its members. The mixture of the two together has defined cultural heritage as the result of an inevitable natural process. In light of these primeval and essentialist characteristics, cultural heritage has been defined as a kind of undisputable truth. Perspectives that emphasize social construction view culture as one of the major variables that build and shape the social system: norms, values, beliefs, and practices at global, national, and local levels. In other words, culture is perceived as an entity that exists outside the minds and actions of individual people. Rather, it refers to the force molding to which individuals are exposed by virtue of living in a particular social system (Schwartz 2009). Being structured through conditions governed by social dynamics that occur in a specific time–space, cultural heritage is subject to various ideological forces. One of them is the process of homogenizing and stabilizing the collective identity. Rituals, custom, narratives, and material objects take part in the intensive “cultural work” needed to shape the groups’ symbolic borders and uniqueness and to distinguish them from Other groups. Particularity thus becomes the requirement for and consequence of the levels of participation in the process of (re)building cultural heritage (Griswold and Wright 2004). In this manner, subcultures are often identified by sufficiently homogeneous and autonomous cultural characteristics that are consistently distinctive from the dominant culture and act as instruments for establishing and reinforcing intra-group social solidarity (Thornton 1995; Smith, Bond and Kagitcibasi 2006). At the same time, subcultures demarcate the boundaries that position groups as either the binary pole of the dominant culture or a hybrid juncture between opposing cultures (Hebdige 1979). Correspondingly, labelling the Other as culturally different (“subculture”) and thus inferior, is perceived as one of the currently prevalent oppressive strategies and as a means for

creating social hierarchies and inequality among groups regarding their heritage. Furthermore, labelling the Other as culturally different can prevent a full and equal inclusion of cultural elements that comprise the Other's heritage and identity (Asante, Yoshitaka and Jing 2008).

Cultural heritage and the concept of nation

Cultural heritage is believed to be the essence that glued the pre-modern nation together (Smith 1981). According to this approach, nationality was created historically from the consolidation of cultural elements that trickled from the past to the present. The encounter of cultural heritage with modernity, and especially with the modern demand of civic equality, gave rise to the national ideology and the nation. The identification with the nation and the national sentiment, which permeated the hearts of its citizens, were therefore perceived as the result of cultural tradition which united and unified them from time immemorial.

In contrast to approaches that see the idea of a cultural heritage as a platform that gave rise to the modern nation and nationality, critical perspectives define cultural heritage as a category that owes its existence to the modern process of nationalization itself (Balibar and Wallerstein, 1991). Emphasizing the role of nationality in establishing and reinforcing cultural heritage does not only negate the existence of cultural heritage as a natural category that develops in and of itself along the temporal axis, but also stresses that heritage is structured and reflected through the interests and aims that serve the national discourse in the present and the future.

Cultural heritage in this context is the result of a strenuous imaginative effort. The imaginative work creates a correspondence between bits of past heritages and the political needs of the nationality in the present. At times, this activity has even completely fabricated the group's cultural heritage. The work of the imagination was concocted out of and through the use of various visual means (the map, the stamp, the emblem) that produced collective cultural codes, that is: a heritage (Anderson 1983). Or, as Renan remarked as early as 1882, the process of nationalizing cultural heritage requires constant upkeep for the uniting culture to overcome every social split, compartmentalization, and stratification. Along with the building and maintenance work, stoking the sense of national belonging also requires creating awareness and collective consciousness. The nation's members must be aware of the cultural tradition that binds them together and of the danger awaiting them should this cultural heritage disintegrate (Gelner 1983). This awareness is attained through diverse social institutions and agents, including: schools, libraries, museums, and commemorative sites.

For example, the education system has played a central role in formulating national collective memories and implementing them in the students' identity (Gel-

ner 1983). The integration of different events, narratives, and symbols into cultural heritage that legitimizes the nation is mostly organized through various rituals implemented in the school curriculum, among them: ceremonies, trips, and parades (Handelman and Shamgar-Handelman 1998). This praxis is communicated through a unique pedagogy that makes extensive use of the pupil's senses and feelings in order to shape and strengthen their national affiliation, identification, and commitment (Ben Amos and Bet-El 1999).

Nevertheless, defining cultural heritage and nationality as constructed entities exposes the complicated interactions between the two. First, nationalities can be distinguished on the basis of the centrality of culture in shaping their identity. Thus, some nationalities are based on a myth of a separatist cultural-biological heritage, and others are based on a more voluntary-civic foundation (Kohn 1944; Greenfeld 1992). Second, nationalities can be distinguished on the basis of the role that cultural heritage plays in the shaping of their identity. History shows that while a certain kind of cultural heritage may take control over the nationalization project and become dominant in it, as in the case of the culture of the English people that became hegemonic in Britain, a different kind of cultural heritage may be eroded in this process and lose its status, as in the case of the Welsh people.

The incomplete integration of cultural minorities in the hegemonic cultural tradition may create genuine socio-political rifts. In order to incorporate in the nation-building project, cultural minorities are forced to erase the cultural markers that sabotage their assimilation/integration process. And third, it is possible to distinguish between the different influences nationality has on cultural heritage. Hence, while nationality may blur distinct cultural markers and unite them together in one common cultural alliance (transforming and recreating the "Other from within" as "one of us"), it can also sharply delineate identities and differences between groups that were not distinct prior to its appearance, as a counter-reaction to the national dominance (Rabinowitz 2001). However, in order to avoid "third spaces" where the dominant cultural heritage is challenged by the constant negotiation of incommensurable cultural differences (Bhabha 2004), or "ethnoscapes" that deconstruct solid national conception with a multi-cultural-fluid character (Appadurai 1996), an intensive boundary work is needed. The collective effort maintains the project of cultural heritage under a significant national identity/narrative. These acts have contributed to the perception of cultural heritage as a temporary project subject to continuous structuring and change, which wishes to become a convention and a banal norm (Billig 1997).

Jewish cultural heritage as nationalism

The idea of Jewish nationality (Zionism) was conceived and shaped for the most part in light of the central-eastern European Ashkenazi Jewish culture (Boyarin 1997). Alongside this trend, Jewish nationalism fed on diverse Jewish communities that made the state of Israel one of the world's largest immigration countries. In addition to Jews of European origin (Ashkenazim), immigrants to Israel also included many Jewish communities originating in the Arab and Muslim world in North Africa, Asia, and the Middle East (Mizrahim). These communities made up around 20% of the overall Jewish world at the time. The emigration of Jews from Arab/Muslim countries coincided with varied interests. The rulers of the Arab countries wanted to get rid of the Jewish minority and enjoy their confiscated/abandoned property, and the Israeli state needed a cheap workforce and a demographic advantage over its Palestinian inhabitants (Meir-Glitzenstein 2022). The Jewish communities that had settled in Asia and North Africa encountered Jewish nationalism while in possession of a solid and diverse cultural heritage, which had formed in relation to and alongside the Arab/Muslim communities among which they had lived for hundreds of years. Since these heritages drew inspiration from the Arab/Muslim culture, and since in the course of the twentieth century Jews became more and more involved in the society, culture, and politics of some of the Arab countries (Levi 2008), these heritages created a cultural mix that was termed "Arab-Jewish" (Shalom Shitrit 2004; Shenhav and Hever 2012).

Common to all the Arab-Jewish cultural heritages was the affinity they had with the Arab/Muslim world prior to immigrating to the state of Israel. Nevertheless, the different communities were spread over a vast and diverse social-cultural-political realm. Each of the communities (Iraqi Jewish, Persian Jewish, Syrian Jewish, Yemenite Jewish and so on) differed from the others in many characteristics: linguistic, ritualistic, material, and visual-aesthetic. The differences existed not only between Jewish communities that had solidified in different geo-cultural regions, but also within the Jewish communities in the same region/country. Despite the great divergence, upon arriving in Israel the Jewish communities that had emigrated from Arab/Muslim countries were perceived as having a shared and unified cultural heritage. The absorbers, mostly Ashkenazi Jews, gave them various generalizing names: "Jews of Mizrahi extraction" and "Mizrahim" (Hebrew for East/Orient). Unifying all the Arab-Jewish communities under one simplifying heading stemmed from the ignorance of the Ashkenazi Zionist Jews, which made it difficult for them to perceive the divergence that characterized the cultural heritage of each of the Eastern communities. Many of the Ashkenazi Zionists of European origin were also plagued with orientalist views in which the East constituted the inferior mirror image of modern Western progress (Khazzoom 2003). Despite the attitude directed towards the Mizrahi Jews, the dominant Ashkenazi Zionist group adopted the notion of the

“melting pot” to mark the boundaries of the Israeli society. The “melting pot” policy wished to integrate the Jewish diasporas under one unifying umbrella while erasing the diasporic Jewish cultures and shared heritage that characterized their lives outside of the state of Israel (Raz-Krakotzkin 1994; 2005).

For this reason, for example, and in contrast to national movements in Europe, folklore did not serve as the unifying glue between the different Jewish subcultures that comprised the Jewish nation, since folklore represented a link to the Jewish cultures in the diaspora and was therefore perceived as a spanner in the wheels of the Zionist movement (Schrire 2019). Thus, the goal of the “melting pot” process was to reform the Arab-Jews’ heritage by ideologically reintegrating them into the national identity.

This approach relied on a logic that had developed in the 19th century that claimed that only ethnic groups that underwent a cultural evolution could succeed in solidifying into a national movement (ibid). Furthermore, this policy was perceived by its founders as colorblind, even though it aimed to blur the cultural differences between the various Jewish groups and especially to erase their Arab/Muslim characteristics. While trying to fulfil the “melting pot” goals, the Ashkenazi group was torn up by internal tension as to the cultural nature of the Mizrahi Jews. This led to the adoption of a double-faced approach. On the one hand, the Ashkenazi Jews perceived and used the Mizrahi Jewish groups’ cultural heritage as the primordial raw material through which the Jewish nationality was imagined, due to the authenticity that was attributed to it. On the other hand, the very existence of a non-European Jewish cultural heritage undermined the validity of the modern Western national narrative that Ashkenazi Zionism wanted to adopt (Forum 2002). Moreover, after immigrating to Israel the Mizrahi Jewish groups maintained a profound affinity with the culture of the Orient in general and the Arab/Muslim culture in particular, while resisting the cultural codes and heritage that were created by the Ashkenazi Jewish Zionists. The Mizrahim’s connections to the Muslim and Arab world positioned them in the margins of the Zionist, European based, culture and heritage. Being perceived as the dichotomous opposite of the Ashkenazi Zionist cultural heritage, the Mizrahim were described by the Ashkenazi Jewish Zionists as having a traditional, primitive, and even irrational culture and beliefs. These orientalist assumptions about the Mizrahim’s cultural heritage excluded them from the dominant Ashkenazi national culture (Shenhav 2006). Since any resemblance between the Mizrahi culture and the Arab culture was understood as a transgressive juxtaposition that is threatening the national unity, the cultural borders were continuously kept under guard. These efforts prevented boundary crossing, or any kind of hyphenation that could configure hybrid Muslim-Jewish or Oriental-European identities. Thus, in order to maintain the differentiation between Zionism and the rest of the Arab cultures and heritage, a binary distinction was constructed between Mizrahi-Jews and Arabs (Shohat 1988). The process of the

de-Arabization of the Mizrahi Jews lead to cultural segregation that was enforced in order to blur any possible Jewish–Arab definition/identification (Hochberg 2007; Shenhav and Hever 2012), while strengthening the cultural heritage that evolved from the Holocaust and the wars in the Middle East and constructing them as a powerful contrasting heritage in relation to that of the Arabs (Handelman 1998; Handelman and Katz 1998; Yonah et al. 2010). The project of de-Arabization had a double effect with regards to issues of cultural heritage: it promised the Mizrahi group full integration into the Israeli national heritage and identity, and at the same time it created and reproduced the hierarchy between the Mizrahi cultural heritage and that of Zionism. The rift between Mizrahi and Ashkenazi Jews also reflected the rift that occurred between Mizrahi Jews and the Arabs within the state of Israel. In other words, the stratification process that emerged along cultural lines (Mizrahim/Ashkenazim) contributed to stratification along national lines (Arabs/Jews). Thus, the battle in the field of culture exposed the immanent tension between cultural heritage and nationality in the Israeli context. These hierarchies and tensions produced simultaneous processes of inclusion and exclusion of the Mizrahi group, tensions which had, and still have, a crucial effect on the Israeli culture (Hertzog 1984). The simultaneous social mechanism constantly sabotaged the presumably stable boundary that distinguishes between Mizrahim and Arabs and between cultural heritage and nationality, uncovering the existence of Mizrahiyut and at the same time locking it in a labeled and stereotyped image. In light of this, the Mizrahim and the Mizrahi cultural heritage were positioned in a nonhegemonic status and were sometimes also excluded to the margins of the dominant national society and culture (Yonah 2005). Only after Israeli politics underwent dramatic changes, when the ruling party of *Mapai* lost the election in 1977, did the Ashkenazi hegemonic narrative allow the visibility of a more diverse and multi-vocal culture and heritage and the Mizrahi group gained dominance in the public sphere (Abutbul-Selinger 2022). Museums that were created in communities of non-Ashkenazi Jewish immigrants and represented different past legacies and different national narrative and culture, started to flourish in the Israeli public sphere (Katriel 2013). For example, the *Babylonian Jewish heritage center* in Or Yehuda opened its doors in 1988 (Meir-Glitzenstein 2002); the *Cochin Jewish heritage center* in Moshav Nevatim was established in 1996 (Cordaro 2013); *The center for the heritage of Libyan Jewry* in Or Yehuda started to work in 2003 (Rossetto 2013); and the *David Amar World center for North African Jewish heritage* in Jerusalem has been operating since 2011 (Trevisan Semi 2013). Even though only some of these museums and heritage centers are officially recognized by the state, the fact that these voices are being narrated, preserved, and exhibited shows that the Israeli-Jewish hegemonic narrative is broadening and challenging the “melting pot” narrative and praxis. Thus, while the hegemonic national discourse negates the intra-Jewish ethnic boundaries, it also acknowledges an ethnic multivocality. This tendency is also accompanied by

a heated public debate regarding the historical injustices caused by the national discourse and praxis, and has even given rise to public apologies (Amir 2012). But despite that, the tensions among various Jewish ethnic groups that share the common national identity continue to deepen (Kimmerling 2008).

Israeli Palestinians cultural heritage as nationalism

The case of the Palestinian society living in Israel is different. The Palestinians had a bloody relationship with the old Jewish inhabitants that lived in the region for thousands of years as well as with the new Jewish-Zionist waves of migration. The Jewish-Zionist immigration did not seek to govern the Arabs from the outside (like for instance Belgian colonialism in Congo or British colonialism in India), but to reestablish in small parts of the land their primordial home, in its national version. As a result, after Israel was established and after Israel survived the harsh war imposed on her by the Arab world in '48, the Palestinian population that remained living in Israel was defined as an ethno-religious-national minority. Comprising a Sunni Muslim majority as well as Christians, Druze, and Galilee and Negev Bedouins, and constituting around 20% of the country's inhabitants, Israeli Palestinians are also defined as a collection of small minority groups that divide among themselves in their relation to the Israeli state. Thus, the Israeli Palestinians cannot be perceived as a nationally cohesive group. Driven by this, Israeli Palestinians are sometimes identified as a national enemy from within, while at the same time they are full citizens of the state of Israel (Samocha 1999).

The co-existence of Jews and Arabs in Israel had various effects on the Israeli Palestinian society. The Palestinian population has grown over the years from 108,000 Palestinians living in Israel after the '48 war to 2.1 million in 2024.¹ Israeli Palestinians hold Israeli citizenship and are part of the Israeli supreme court and the Israeli parliament since the first *Knesset*. As the only Arab group living in a democratic state in the Middle East, Israeli Palestinians enjoy a flourishing civil society that includes 3,895 organizations (N.G.O's) that work to benefit the Arab society in Israel, including LGBTQ Israeli Palestinian organization.² Approximately 70% of the Israeli Palestinian students finish high school and pass the matriculation exams, while 20% attend universities and colleges (Hadad Haj Yahya et al. 2021). Despite that, the Palestinians suffer from inequality in the social, economic, cul-

1 The growth rate of Palestinian population is 2.2 (1.8 in the Jewish population). Life expectancy has increased 27 years since '48.

2 The first Israeli Palestinian N.G.O was registered in 1969. Since then, 200 new organizations are registering annually.

tural, and political spheres, as well as segregation (Yiftachel 1997), separation (Abu-Asbeh 2006), and marginalization (Shafir and Peled 2002).

Due to their positioning in the Israeli stratified society, the translation of the Palestinians' ethnic affiliation into a separate national heritage was largely prevented (Yonah 2005; Jamal 2007). At the same time, Israeli Palestinians were not included in the national construction of the Palestinian state by the Palestinians living in the West Bank and Gaza (outside of the borders of the state of Israel). Neglected and even abandoned during the political processes conducted since the 1990s, the Palestinian political leadership in Israel was also exempt from vital discussions regarding their national-cultural affiliation, while the Palestinians' partial assimilation in the Israeli-Jewish society was de-legitimized (Man'a 1995). As a result, the post-Oslo struggles of the Palestinian community were directed towards civic issues within the state of Israel rather than towards (inter)national issues (Al-Haj 1995). The civic tendency weakened with the collapse of the peace narrative. The model of autonomy, which would have allowed maintaining a cultural heritage with the Palestinians living outside of Israel, was forgotten (Ozacky-Lazar and Ghanem 1990). The model of "a state for all its citizens," which was supposed to rely on a civil shared cultural heritage (Bishara 2002), was harshly rejected by Israel and the Palestinians, and the bi-national state that has been emerging in Israel in recent years cannot grant the Israeli Palestinians equal national status and/or a multicultural society.

As the national struggle with the Palestinians in the West Bank and Gaza became more heated, the Palestinian community in Israel turned to a process of local nationalization and national-Islamization (Rechess 2002). Nationalization was believed to be the route to equality in the Israeli society. In order to become a nationally-recognized minority, the construction of the Palestinian nationality within the state of Israel was realized by the recreation of the memory of the lost Palestine (before '48). The memory awakening of the lost Palestine served to combat their previous cultural heritage, which was mainly characterized as oral, local, and non-formal, mostly presenting a non-historically contingent heritage that is disconnected from current affairs (Hazan 2017). For example, the national Palestinian identity and the collective memory of the *Nakba* (the catastrophe) are not represented in the small Arab museums that are operating in Israel (Kark and Perry 2008), while most of the museums are dedicated to the documentation of Arab village life and folklore as they existed in small communities before '48 (Haj-Yehia and Lev-Tov 2018).

Palestinian cultural heritage also served to combat the policy of exclusion and neglect implemented through diminishing governmental funds and support for local cultural centers, museums, music halls, archives, and libraries (Sorek 2015). Thus, for example, the first monument for fallen Palestinian civilians in Israel was designed in Sakhnin in 1976 (Amit 2008; Ben Zvi, Khalilieh and Farah 2008); the first cultural center for the Palestinian public in Israel was established in Nazareth in the

1980s (Landau 2015); the first cultural-historical museum, dedicated to the canonization of the collective memory, opened its doors in Sakhnin in 1990 (Shay 2011); and the *Association for the Arab Culture*, aiming to reinforce national-cultural identity, began to operate only in 1998. In other words, national Palestinian narrative and heritage are either avoided or presented in a subtle manner. Only few museums, like the *Kufr Kassem Massacre Museum*, deal with direct political issues, but these institutions are not supported by the state. When diversity is presented in order to reinforce local communities, it is done in a way that does not threaten the national narrative and cultural heritage, like in the case of the *Umm al-Fahm Art Gallery*, which adopted a pluralist approach that allows it to make the Palestinian national narrative and heritage visible and at the same time serves as a way to receive government recognition (Haj Yahya 2021). The re-imagination of the Palestinian nation/nationality was handled by the state in various ways. While some of the Palestinian attempts were limited by the state-driven process of national identification, others were equated with the Israeli-Jewish cultural visibility and aimed to safeguard the procedural rights of the Palestinian's cultural self-determination (preserving distinctive linguistics, history, and tradition). These developments mostly exemplified processes of "heritage from below" (Robertson 2012) that wished to preserve the lost cultural heritage of the past and use it to build the national heritage of the future. Despite these tendencies, in 2022 the state of Israel decided to build cultural institutions in the Palestinian communities living in Israel, which will give each community's heritage voice and visibility. The cultural institutions scheduled to be built in 2023 include a repertory theater, an art museum, a cinematheque, a performing arts school, music centers, and art galleries. The plan included a first ever mapping of conservation sites in Arab settlements in Israel. Following the survey, a list of thousands of sites representing the Palestinian heritage in Israel was drawn up (Kashti 2022). 365 million NIS were allocated through the Ministry of Culture in order to realize the plan. The first tender published so far deals with founding an artistic repertory theater in Arabic. A central element of the program is conserving historical centers. So far, all the sites recognized for conservation have been in Jewish settlements. The conservation sites in the Palestinian settlements in Israel have been defined as buildings of historical and architectural value built after 1700. Sites built before this period are classified as ancient sites. In this sphere too there is an ongoing struggle that may lead to change. The main struggle is over the question of the attribution of archeological findings found in Palestinian settlements in Israel (or those under partial Israeli control). The issue of the legal status of archeological activity and archeological findings is caught up in a tangle of regulations and recommendations deriving from the Oslo accords, international law, and the civil administration appointed by the Israeli state (Kersel 2008). Since an archeological exploration is methodologically-speaking a process of controlled destruction, questions arise concerning the kind of findings that would get destroyed in the excavation process, as well as questions concerning the cultural-

national attribution/ownership of the findings extracted from the ground. These questions remain to a large extent without a clear answer. At the same time, new resources – websites discussion groups, online communities, vlogs, blogs, and social networks – are accessible to Palestinians living in Israel. The internet provides a platform to exhibit and share collections of photographs, documents, music, art, and films that expose and explore various features of the Palestinian nationalized heritage.

Caught in the grip of these contrasting forces, Palestinian citizens of Israel try to articulate their identity and cultural heritage as part of their attempts to position themselves in the Israeli society. Thus, tensions among the various Palestinian groups and between Israeli Palestinians and Israeli Jews, which split along national, religious, and ethnic lines, continue to deepen (Kimmerling 2001).

Epilogue: Cultural heritage as an unstable category

National narrative and identity play a constitutive role in the creation of cultural heritage in the modern state. Nationality participates actively in the construction of cultural heritage by using practices of negotiation, selection, classification, assimilating, and exclusion. It seems that for the time being this concern, which seeks to tie nationality with cultural heritage, is not dropping off the political agenda. The cultural heritage in its visual and material manifestations (flag, emblem, caricature) still constitutes the glue that binds nations together and mobilizes them to struggle for self-definition and sovereignty. The notion of a shared heritage becomes associated with values and worldviews such as freedom, democracy, and resistance to oppression. The sovereignty of a nation that has unified itself through cultural characteristics even becomes associated with responsibility for the welfare of the human world as a whole. Thus, for example, the danger of nuclear catastrophe looms over the world when the sovereignty of a nation claiming the existence of a cultural tradition (Ukrainians) is threatened by a nation that doesn't respect this tradition and even refutes its existence (Russians). However, cultural heritage has also been accused of resisting values and worldviews such as freedom, democracy, and resistance to oppression. In its name, social groups have sought to distinguish themselves from other groups in a separatist act that has created regional danger, caused bloody civil wars, threatens to jeopardize the democratic regime, and has maltreated foreigners. The cultural heritage is a platform and a praxis that make it possible to create a unified political community, and at the same time cultural heritage challenges the attempt to overcome differences and create dynamic and agreed-upon cultural federations that do not submit to political and symbolic borders.

The Israeli case study demonstrates the Gordian knot that binds nationality and cultural heritage. Addressing issues of preservation, designation, representation,

and positioning, heritage-making in Israel has evolved in-between the poles created by the Palestinian/Jews and the Ashkenazi/Mizrahi divisions. Thus, basing the demand for national sovereignty on the existence of cultural heritage allows the state of Israel to have it both ways. Cultural heritage promises intra-Jewish national unity that challenges various Jewish-Arab hybrids and amalgams. At the same time, cultural heritage strives to grant Palestinians living in Israel a cultural autonomy that would reduce the contact between Arabs and Jews and thus make it possible to refrain from engaging with political issues and minimize the conflict, yet without drawing a permanent border that would split the Jewish national state between two peoples (Lustik 1999). In this trade-off, Arab-Jews (Mizrahim) are given a national identity instead of their cultural heritage, whereas the Israeli Palestinians are given a cultural heritage instead of a national identity. It is an inconclusive and ongoing situation that tries to neutralize forces that push for a separation between the nations on the basis of cultural traditions, and at the same time tries to neutralize the creation of a bi-national/cultural state or a state characterized by multiculturalism. It seems that we should pay close attention to Balibar's (1991) claim that it is precisely processes of nationalization that make societies more and more ethnocentric, since nationality feeds on and emphasizes the cultural heritage of the past as the unifying power of the future.

Flipping the gaze from the past to the future, while experiencing radical changes of knowledge-construction and transformation, will make it possible to shift the focus of heritage to global issues such as nuclear waste, climate crisis, change landscapes, and other troubling phenomena. Transforming heritage from a "national treasure" approach to more of a "all humankind" approach, freed from national regulators, experts, and authorities, can guarantee a new deployment and access to culture as a source of humane value. A wishful thinking that collapsed since some of the Palestinians have turned to radical Islam.

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