



**TOGETHERNESS  
A NEW HERITAGE DEAL  
FOR EUROPE**

*Hermann Parzinger*

BIG IDEAS III



# TOGETHERNESS A NEW HERITAGE DEAL FOR EUROPE

*Hermann Parzinger*



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## BIG IDEAS

Europe's cultural heritage is a vast, multifaceted mosaic showing who we were, who we are and who we aspire to be. We are all responsible for this huge, precious and fragile legacy.

The coronavirus pandemic revealed that unexpected events can suddenly change our way of life. In the future, other threats could well pose further challenges to our safety, health and environment as well as our social structures, values and ability to compete on the global markets.

How can Europe fulfil its promise if we do not reinvent and redesign the very basis of the European project and come up with innovative and bold solutions for a better and more sustainable future together?

We need a "New Heritage Deal for Europe", a heritage-led transformation of Europe's society, economy and environment.

Prof. Dr Hermann Parzinger is an archaeologist, historian and cultural heritage expert. In 2018, he was appointed Executive President of Europa Nostra, a pan-European federation for cultural heritage that represents civil society organisations seeking to safeguard Europe's cultural and natural heritage. Since 2013, Europa Nostra has been running among its key activities the *7 Most Endangered Programme* in partnership with the European Investment Bank Institute.

This is the fifteenth essay in the *Big Ideas* series created by the European Investment Bank.

The EIB has invited international thought leaders and experts to write about the most important issues of the day. These essays are a reminder that we need new thinking to protect the environment, promote equality and improve people's lives around the globe.

CHÂTEAU DE VERSAILLES, HALL OF MIRRORS.

EUROPE'S SHARED HERITAGE IS A MIRROR OF OUR SHARED CULTURE AND HISTORY.



## TOGETHERNESS

*The past is never over.  
Our history is not a closed book.  
And bygones are not bygones.<sup>(1)</sup>*

Whether we like it or not, we are all intrinsically connected to our past. Europe's cultural heritage is the direct result of our ancestors' deeds, efforts and decisions. Past and present generations have built – together – a complex and multilayered *Gesamtkunstwerk* which we are now responsible for safeguarding and improving. It is time to acknowledge that this shared heritage, this sense of togetherness, is the real foundation on which Europe is built.

Europe's cultural heritage is a vast, multifaceted mosaic that is both complex and interrelated. It does not belong to a specific time period or a single community or country. It shows us how our lives are connected to a long line of generations coming before and after us. Our cultural heritage holds up a mirror to who we were, who we are and who we aspire to be, and helps us to interpret our past successes and failures. When we dig a little deeper, we quickly discover that all our heritage is, in a real sense, as much local as it is European, and often connected to other cultures around the world.

The COVID-19 pandemic that swept through our planet like a tsunami is a clear reminder that we are not living in isolation. Viruses do not respect borders, political affiliations or nationalities. The pandemic showed us just how fragile our societal fundamentals are. It also made clear to most Europeans that we are far more than just a collection of countries. As the founding fathers and mothers of the European Union knew all too well, our Union is not the beginning of our European story; it is a consequence. Europe is not an abstract, political creation; it is the result of the past and present interconnectedness of everyone living in Europe.

ICONIC HERITAGE SITES LIKE THE ACROPOLIS IN ATHENS REPRESENT THE CULTURAL FOUNDATION OF THE ENTIRE EUROPEAN PROJECT.





We are so much more than a cluster of trade agreements, a military alliance or a research consortium. Europe cannot be defined by decisions on competition rules, consumer protection, privacy or labour laws alone, as vital as they all are. The real Europe is primarily shaped by our connections, as individuals and communities, beyond bias and borders, languages and time. These relationships built the foundation of our Europe as we know it today. For all its grave consequences, the COVID-19 pandemic might also give us an opportunity to rediscover, rethink and reclaim our common ground and purpose.

The way forward to a safe, prosperous, sustainable and inclusive Europe has to be defined despite our national, local and personal differences. We have to focus on what brings us together, not what divides us, and our cultural heritage is what connects this complicated puzzle. If we want Europe to be a beacon of hope and solidarity in a vulnerable world, we have to rediscover and reassert our common ground and our shared foundation – our togetherness.

**“ How can Europe fulfil its promise if we do not reinvent the European project together? ”**

The COVID-19 crisis made clear, in an unprecedented way, that unexpected developments can fundamentally change our society in an instant. The future undoubtedly will reveal other threats to our safety, health, climate and environment. Our way of life, our ability to compete on the global market, our social structures and values, including the rule of law, will be challenged. How can Europe fulfil its promise if we do not reinvent and redesign the very basis of the European project and come up with innovative and bold solutions for a better and more sustainable future together?

THE "BERLIN CALL TO ACTION" WAS LAUNCHED AT THE 2018 EUROPEAN HERITAGE SUMMIT CO-ORGANISED BY EUROPA NOSTRA IN THE GERMAN CAPITAL.



# A NEW HERITAGE DEAL FOR EUROPE

## A NEW HERITAGE DEAL FOR EUROPE

We need a New Heritage Deal for Europe. I believe that our cities and countryside, as well as the many thousands of monuments and sites which reflect our rich and diverse cultures, our history and universal values, laws and ideas, and arts and sciences, are the ideal building blocks to achieve such an ambitious goal. I firmly believe that a New Heritage Deal for Europe is not only necessary but also possible through a heritage-led transformation of Europe's society, economy and environment, with the process powered by civil society and supported by local, regional, national and European organisations and institutions. The great success of the first ever European Year of Cultural Heritage (EYCH) in 2018 gave us confirmation of the wide-ranging potential of this idea. The EYCH encouraged people to discover and engage with Europe's cultural heritage, and reinforced a sense of belonging to a common European space. It resulted in 23 000 events in 37 countries. The Year also led to the first ever European Framework for Action on Cultural Heritage, a broad and holistic vision adopted by the European Commission for safeguarding, managing and enhancing Europe's cultural heritage.

“ In 2018 the first European Year of Cultural Heritage resulted in 23 000 events in 37 countries.

It is evident to me that the key to success for the proposed New Heritage Deal for Europe lies with civil society. If communities are well organised, creativity and accountability are increased in almost every aspect of life, including how we take care of our cultural heritage. Statistics, numbers or facts are not enough. We need to capture the hearts and minds of Europeans citizens. How could the proposed New Heritage Deal accomplish that? By preserving and restoring the tens of thousands of

THE MEMORY AND HERITAGE OF COAL MINING COMMUNITIES NEED TO BE PRESERVED FOR FUTURE GENERATIONS.

THE QUEEN LOUISE ADIT COMPLEX, ZABRZE, UPPER SILESIA, POLAND (EU/EUROPA NOSTRA GRAND PRIX 2019).



monuments, sites and cultural landscapes across Europe. By working collectively on the poor neighbourhoods we seem to have forgotten about the small villages struggling to survive, and the old industrial cities which have lost their soul. We can use the successes of the regenerated industrial quarters of Lille (France), Katowice (Poland) and Manchester (United Kingdom) as promising examples. We must also replace mass tourism with more sustainable and responsible forms by, for instance, promoting lesser-known destinations to spread visitors more evenly across Europe. Civil society organisations, driven by local communities and the general public, are perfectly positioned to lead the revitalisation of Europe's cultural heritage. Obviously, we cannot save every site or every monument with public money alone. We must unlock the potential of the private sector for the revival and transformation of Europe's heritage.

Europa Nostra<sup>[2]</sup> – the organisation of which I am Executive President – has studied, protected, celebrated and promoted heritage on a European scale for more than 55 years. In the Paris Manifesto<sup>[3]</sup>, published on 30 October 2019, representatives of the world of cultural heritage, facilitated by Europa Nostra, asserted that our shared cultural heritage needs to be at the heart of the European project. Without it, Europe would not and could not exist. It is the underlying reason of what it means to be European. This is also the core of what Europa Nostra stands for, our *raison d'être*.

As the International Centre for the Study of the Preservation and Restoration of Cultural Property also stated in a recent article *What Constitutes a Good Life*<sup>[4]</sup>: “While there may be tacit recognition that culture contributes to wellbeing, from a policy point of view this consideration is still in its infancy. [...] When culture is reduced to a recreational pastime, when we fail to recognise heritage as a way of life that links both livelihood and identity, opportunities to enhance meaning and value

THE TURKU ARCHIPELAGO IN FINLAND IS AN EXAMPLE OF HARMONIOUS CONNECTION BETWEEN LOCAL COMMUNITIES, NATURE AND HERITAGE.



in our lives are lost.” On 9 May 2020, Europe Day, the European Heritage Alliance published another manifesto: *Cultural Heritage: a powerful catalyst for the future of Europe*<sup>51</sup>. This manifesto shows seven interconnected ways to achieve positive societal change through cultural heritage: 1. *Healing Europe*; 2. *Being Europe*; 3. *Digitally Transforming Europe*; 4. *Greening Europe*; 5. *Regenerating Europe*; 6. *Experiencing Europe*; 7. *Embracing the World*. It reflects the firm belief of the European Heritage Alliance that Europe must respond to the COVID-19 pandemic with the long-needed and far-reaching transformation of our way of life.

For too long there has been misalignment and even mistrust between European citizens and European institutions. We have somehow lost sight of one another and we sometimes do not seem to understand each other very well. For many people, Europe still seems too preoccupied with numbers, rules, institutions, slogans and quick fixes. This has negatively influenced how we feel and think about the European project, and sometimes threatened its very existence.

Today, the European Union’s institutions are keen to bridge this gap through a series of far-sighted policies in response to pressing societal challenges, from climate change to the health emergency, from digital transformation to sustainable development, from social cohesion to migration, from media freedom to respect for the rule of law. In response to widely felt concerns and following consultations with civil society, European leaders are placing stronger emphasis again on the vital importance of European values and the promotion of the European way of life. All this entails stronger support for culture and education as an indispensable investment in Europe’s human capital.

In her State of the European Union speech<sup>52</sup> at the European Parliament on 16 September 2020, the President of the European Commission, Ursula von der Leyen, clearly confirmed this most welcome ambition. She called

THE SAFEGUARD OF CULTURAL  
HERITAGE REQUIRES DIVERSE  
HERITAGE SKILLS AND CREATES  
NUMEROUS JOBS.





for “a new cultural project for Europe” as part of the implementation of the European Green Deal and an initiative to set up a “new European Bauhaus”<sup>[7]</sup> through a co-creation space where architects, artists, students, engineers, designers will work together to achieve this goal.

We have a unique chance. Today’s unprecedented crisis is also an unprecedented opportunity. If we manage to use our ever-changing, vibrant European culture and heritage as a powerful catalyst for change, and as a vital component of a “new European Bauhaus”, the return on investment will be substantial. I therefore wish to build the case for a New Heritage Deal for Europe, as an integral part of the necessary social, economic, environmental and cultural transformation of our Europe.

**“ If we manage to use our culture and heritage as a catalyst for change, and as a component of a “new European Bauhaus”, the return on investment will be substantial.**

THE HISTORICAL LANDSCAPE OF EL SÉNIA'S ANCIENT OLIVE TREES, SPAIN (EU/ EUROPA NOSTRA GRAND PRIX WINNER 2014).



# CULTURAL HERITAGE: EUROPE'S FUTURE POTENTIAL

## CULTURAL HERITAGE: EUROPE'S FUTURE POTENTIAL

Our shared heritage is an essential part of Europe's DNA and identity. The future of the European project depends on the heartfelt and robust support from its citizens. The Eurobarometer<sup>®</sup> statistics for the European Year of Cultural Heritage speak for themselves: 84% of Europeans believe cultural heritage is important for their community and for them personally. A staggering 91% find cultural heritage important for their country. It is hard to get Europeans to agree on many things, but their support for cultural heritage is indisputable. Most Europeans also realise that their local heritage is part of a wider European story in which our heritage and history are connected.

Investments in our cultural heritage are largely insufficient and should be encouraged and increased as part of the proposed New Heritage Deal for Europe. *Cultural Heritage Counts for Europe*<sup>9)</sup>, a large-scale study promoted by several universities and cultural organisations, including Europa Nostra, unearthed hard facts and figures showing that heritage is a sound investment. This was also the main conclusion reached by *Culture for Cities and Regions*<sup>10)</sup>, a report launched by EUROCITIES, a member of the European Heritage Alliance. The reports also showed us that we need to get our facts right.

“ **84% of Europeans believe cultural heritage is important for their community and for them personally; 91% find it important for their country.** ”

When calculating employment rates in the heritage sector, the authorities only tend to count the restoration experts, architects or curators working on heritage sites and in museums. The numbers, however, do not cover the full range of jobs that are directly or indirectly linked to our cultural

HOW TO STRIKE THE RIGHT BALANCE BETWEEN TOURISM DEVELOPMENT AND HERITAGE PRESERVATION IN HISTORIC CITIES LIKE DUBROVNIK (CROATIA), MADE EVEN MORE FAMOUS AS A LOCATION FOR THE TV SERIES *GAME OF THRONES*.



heritage. Europe has an almost €9 billion trade surplus in cultural goods, which testifies to how important its cultural and creative industries are in the global market. For many people all over the world, Europe is the “continent of culture.” Think of all the products based on our rich historical traditions, from jewellery to wines, from fashion and design to protected regional agricultural products. Tourism is another good example: with nearly 600 million external visitors per year, Europe is by far the most visited continent. London and Paris are amongst the most visited cities in the world. And at least 40% of all these visitors come for cultural purposes. After the manufacturing and construction industries, tourism is the largest contributor to the European Union’s GDP. With its cultural and natural heritage, Europe is also a favoured setting for films and television series (for instance, the World Heritage city of Dubrovnik (Croatia) in *Game of Thrones* or the Greek islands of Skiathos and Skopelos in *Mamma Mia*), worth millions of euros. COVID-19 has had a serious and dramatic impact on all these areas, but these trends will persist in the long run.

Our rich cultural traditions provide our European products and services with a hallmark of quality and reliability.

This has a direct impact on the success of our financial institutions and insurance companies, along with our industrial products and manufacturing companies. Europe is home to both the oldest bank (Monte dei Paschi di Siena) and the oldest university (Alma Mater Studiorum - Università di Bologna). All this is what makes Europe so special.

“ After the manufacturing and construction industries, tourism is the largest contributor to the European Union’s GDP.

THE LA RIOJA REGION IN NORTHERN SPAIN INCREASED VISITOR NUMBERS BY COMBINING INNOVATIVE ARCHITECTURE WITH ANCIENT WINERIES, SUCH AS FRANK GEHRY'S DESIGN FOR THE HOTEL MARQUÉS DE RISCAL IN ELCIEGO.

# HERITAGE-LED TRANSFORMATION



## HERITAGE-LED TRANSFORMATION

Evidence for the multiple benefits of cultural heritage is not just provided by independent research. As shown by the *Cultural and Creative Cities Monitor*<sup>(11)</sup> developed by the European Commission's Joint Research Centre, "Cultural Vibrancy" and "Enabling Environment" can offer substantial rewards, attracting more jobs and people than other settings do. In rural areas, the restoration and revitalisation of cultural and natural heritage contributes to growth based on sustainability and the green transformation. The Horizon 2020 Expert Group on Cultural Heritage set up by the European Commission's DG for Research and Innovation said that "a relatively modest investment in cultural heritage can pay substantial dividends.

These can be taken economically but also in terms of improving environmental sustainability and social cohesion."<sup>(12)</sup> This should be reason enough for the European Union to invest in a New Heritage Deal for Europe, using the many funding tools available: Structural Funds of the European Union, the

European Regional Development Fund, the European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development, the European Social Fund and the Instrument for Pre-Accession Assistance, as well as the newly adopted Next Generation EU recovery package. The proposed New Heritage Deal stands for smarter investment choices which will yield sustainable and measurable results for local communities and their living environment. We need well-planned investments to regenerate our countryside and landscapes, revitalise the energy and beauty of our inner cities, and find innovative ways of using our cultural heritage to

**“ In rural areas, the restoration of cultural and natural heritage contributes to growth based on sustainability and the green transformation.**

THE HISTORICAL ARCHIVES OF THE BANCO DI NAPOLI FOUNDATION USE DIGITAL STORYTELLING, SHORT FILMS AND THEATRICAL PERFORMANCES TO OPEN THEIR VAST COLLECTIONS TO NEW GENERATIONS (IL CARTASTORIE, AWARD WINNER 2017, CATEGORY EDUCATION, TRAINING AND AWARENESS-RAISING).





strengthen local communities and create new jobs. We also need to fully embrace the digital transformation and use its benefits to amplify the impact of our actions. However, this can only be successful with the active participation of civil society, powered by local communities and facilitated by national, regional and local governments and the European institutions, as well as charitable foundations, the business world and the private sector.

The proposed New Heritage Deal for Europe will create momentum. It will allow us to connect cultural players, bridging the gap between the local and the global and stimulating synergies across borders. It will give a future to vulnerable and often run-down inner cities through quality heritage projects while boosting the sustainable development of our regions through innovative actions related to cultural heritage. Well-placed investments in heritage sites and areas will help lift entire neighbourhoods from poverty, contributing to better social cohesion and inclusion. Targeted vocational training can help unemployed young people to hone their skills and play a part in restoring the heritage of their own environments and beyond. We should also make better use of the European Solidarity Corps to enable young people to work, as volunteers or professionals, on restoration sites, natural parks or cultural festivals.

**“ We should make better use of the European Solidarity Corps to enable young people to work, as volunteers or professionals, on restoration sites, natural parks or cultural festivals. ”**

INNOVATION IN ACTION FOR HERITAGE: CULTLAB3D,  
DARMSTADT, GERMANY (EU/EUROPA NOSTRA AWARD  
WINNER 2018).



We should also stop looking at multicultural backgrounds as a hindrance, and instead see them as a source of wealth and opportunity. Intercultural exchanges and creative ideas combined with innovative technologies influence our lives constantly. Our culture and cultural heritage are not static; they are in continuous motion. The complex and multi-layered “theme with variations” of Europe’s culture changes and evolves as it is joined by new voices, instruments and melodies. Sometimes it takes a while to find new harmonies, but we are all part of the same large choir and orchestra, creating and performing this eclectic music together.

INCLUDED IN THE 7 MOST ENDANGERED LIST 2020, REGRETTABLY THE NATIONAL THEATRE OF ALBANIA IN TIRANA WAS DEMOLISHED IN MAY 2020.



# SAVING ENDANGERED HERITAGE TOGETHER

MONUMENT  
KULTURE  
PËR SHKËNËN  
NËGA POPULLI

## SAVING ENDANGERED HERITAGE TOGETHER

It is thanks to the skills and dedication of millions of professionals and volunteers that so much of our European heritage can still be enjoyed. Many heritage sites, however, are still threatened by uncontrolled urban development, a lack of funds and short-sighted political decisions. This is a source of concern for us all, as the implications go far beyond the heritage field. A recent example is the demolition of the Albanian National Theatre in Tirana that took place on 17 May 2020. This historical building was included in the *2020 List of 7 Most Endangered Heritage Sites in Europe*.<sup>[13]</sup> The theatre, which was located in a protected urban area in the historic city centre of Tirana, was bulldozed in one day after two years of protests. It happened at dawn, when the precautionary measures imposed by the pandemic were almost at an end, and despite a large civic movement composed of artists, journalists and activists. The government and the local authorities claim the theatre was destroyed because a lack of maintenance and renovation were causing it to fall to pieces. This was a sad day, not only for cultural heritage, but also for democracy and the rule of law.

**“ We Europeans have to accept that all of Europe’s cultural heritage is our shared responsibility. ”**

We Europeans have to accept that all of Europe’s cultural heritage is our shared responsibility. Before the COVID-19 pandemic, mass tourism had become a heavy burden and even a threat to a number of our historic cities as well as our cultural and natural heritage sites and treasures. Coupled with the major risks caused by climate change, it is impacting our cultural heritage dramatically. Urgent measures are needed to reduce these risks, as part of a future European strategy for more sustainable and responsible tourism. The major slowdown in tourism activity due to the pandemic offers a much-needed window of opportunity. Venice is

THE MOST ENDANGERED SITE IN  
EUROPE, PARTLY DUE TO CLIMATE  
CHANGE.



a striking example which unfortunately faces all the above-mentioned risks. The city has suffered from mass tourism of the most destructive kind, with cruise ships coming far too close to the historic city centre and destroying a natural ecosystem already on the verge of collapse. The city has been slowly sinking in the muddy waters of bad decisions which, besides eroding its fragile architecture and heritage, are affecting the lives of present and future generations. The images of fish, jellyfish and dolphins swimming again in the lagoon during the COVID-19 lockdown are a perfect illustration of what the city's environment could look like if it was not sacrificed to short-term profits. The survival of Venice and its lagoon cannot be viewed as just a Venetian problem or an Italian issue. Achieving a sustainable Renaissance of Venice could in fact be one of the goals, and even a symbol, of the proposed New Heritage Deal for Europe.

This New Heritage Deal should, of course, be closely linked with the European Green Deal. As indicated in the European Heritage Alliance Manifesto, we must ensure that the cultural dimension of the green transformation of our society and economy is fully taken on board. While our cultural heritage, including cultural landscapes, is severely endangered by climate change, the cultural world, with its wealth of traditional knowledge and skills, can also be used to further expand on the mitigation and adaptation practices which can help achieve the ambitious objectives of the European Green Deal. With the support of the European Investment Bank Institute, and in cooperation with ICOMOS, we are currently working on the case for cultural heritage-related climate action at European level.

**“ The survival of Venice and its lagoon cannot be viewed as just a Venetian problem or an Italian issue.**

NOTRE-DAME DE PARIS WAS SAVED FROM COLLAPSING THANKS TO THE SKILLS AND COURAGE OF THE PARIS FIRE BRIGADE, HONoured BY A SPECIAL EU/EUROPA NOSTRA AWARD 2019.





Another example of the fragility of our heritage is the dramatic fire that caused significant damage to Notre-Dame Cathedral in Paris on 15 April 2019. The fire showed that even the world's best-known and best-protected sites can be vulnerable. The enormous outpouring of support and solidarity after the ravages of the fire showed how people around the world instinctively understood that Notre-Dame was not just a Parisian or French cathedral; it was something that belonged to all of us. In the aftermath, there was a real sense of the formidable connecting force of our shared heritage. As a token of Europe's deep gratitude and admiration, the Paris firefighters who saved the cathedral from collapsing were honoured with a special European Heritage Award/Europa Nostra Award at the European Cultural Heritage Summit held in Paris in 2019.

“ **The outpouring of support and solidarity after the ravages of the fire showed how people instinctively understood that Notre-Dame was not just a Parisian or French cathedral; it was something that belonged to all of us.** ”

Heritage sites are also threatened by political and military conflicts, as shown, for instance, by the armed conflicts in the Balkans in the 1990s and the most recent conflict in the disputed region of Nagorno-Karabakh in the Caucasus. Recently, we have witnessed the destruction of cultural treasures in Iraq, Syria and Yemen; the attacks on the ancient cities of Aleppo and Palmyra (Syria), the demolition of the museum and library of Mosul (Iraq), and the airstrike on the Great Dam of Marib (Yemen) are just a few of the many examples. Europe cannot ignore what is happening in the rest of the world. Knowledge comes with responsibility. That means we should show solidarity and share our know-how and best practices. We should help the capacity building of cultural heritage bodies and civil society organisations in other parts

ARCHAEOLOGY AS A TOOL FOR INTERCULTURAL EXCHANGES AND UNDERSTANDING BETWEEN YOUNG PEOPLE IN ITALY AND SYRIA (ILUCIDARE SPECIAL PRIZE WINNER 2020).



of the world. Especially in Africa and in the Middle East, heritage sites are increasingly under threat from uncontrolled development projects, a lack of human and financial resources and the lack of responsible leadership that can lead to disasters like the tragic giant explosion in Beirut on 4 August 2020.

The proposed New Heritage Deal for Europe can work only if we realise that all of our heritage sites, from the largest palace or museum to the smallest chapel or farm, are important as symbols of our connection to one another, of our togetherness. It was with this underlying motivation that Europa Nostra launched, with the European Investment Bank Institute, *The 7 Most Endangered Programme*<sup>(14)</sup> in 2013. It identifies the monuments, sites, and cultural landscapes under the greatest threat in Europe and mobilises public and private partners at all levels to find a viable future for these heritage treasures. The Venice Lagoon, for instance, was declared the most endangered heritage site in Europe, given the complexities of the threats it is facing, including those caused by climate change.

LISTED AMONG THE 7 MOST ENDANGERED SITES IN 2013, THE MONASTERY OF JESUS IN SETÚBAL (PORTUGAL) IS TODAY SUCCESSFULLY RESTORED AND TRANSFORMED INTO A MUSEUM.

A photograph of the Monastery of Jesus in Setúbal, Portugal, under a clear blue sky. The building is a large, light-colored stone structure with Gothic architectural features, including pointed arches and a decorative cornice. In the foreground, there is a well-maintained green lawn with several young trees supported by wooden stakes. A paved walkway leads towards the entrance on the left. The text 'THE 7 MOST ENDANGERED PROGRAMME' is overlaid in large, white, bold, sans-serif capital letters across the center of the image.

# THE 7 MOST ENDANGERED PROGRAMME

## THE 7 MOST ENDANGERED PROGRAMME

The positive and encouraging results produced by the *7 Most Endangered Programme* are one of the reasons why I believe that a New Heritage Deal for Europe can bring about long-term positive change. For the Monastery of Jesus in Setúbal (Portugal), Bourla Theatre in Antwerp (Belgium) and the Colbert Swing Bridge in Dieppe (France), for instance, sustainable solutions have already been found. Our Programme shows, however, that we are sometimes facing tough challenges. As mentioned before, the Albanian National Theatre in Tirana was brutally demolished two months after Europa Nostra and the European Investment Bank Institute included the site on our *7 Most Endangered 2020* list. Although the Picasso frescoes were saved, the Y-Block in Oslo, also on the 2020 list, will also be demolished. This means there is no opportunity for our expert mission to visit the site, talk to all stakeholders concerned and propose recommendations for saving the site – a situation which we deeply regret.

“ **For the Monastery of Jesus in Setúbal, Bourla Theatre in Antwerp and the Colbert Swing Bridge in Dieppe, sustainable solutions have already been found.**

A further illustration of Europe’s complex challenges can be found in a specific endangered site in the last divided capital city in Europe. The Buffer Zone in Nicosia, Cyprus, was placed on the very first list of the *7 Most Endangered Programme*.<sup>[15]</sup> Europa Nostra had the opportunity to visit the Zone and experience first-hand the resilience of the Turkish and Greek Cypriot communities who worked together tirelessly to bring about the respectful and sustainable regeneration of the entire area. There have been many disappointments over the years, though. Many of the high-level negotiations and talks have ended in failure. However, no matter how large the differences, a sustainable solution for the Buffer

WOUNDED HEART OF HISTORIC NICOSIA  
(CYPRUS): TODAY AN ABANDONED BUFFER  
ZONE, TOMORROW A DYNAMIC CREATIVE  
CENTRE OF A REUNITED CITY?



Zone must and will be found. If we keep repeating our mistakes, if we teach our children to look for what keeps communities and people apart, we will never make headway. Europe has a long and complicated past, but we have to find hope and light even in our darkest days as a continent. The Buffer Zone in Nicosia shows that we need to open our eyes and hearts before our minds can change.

The Buffer Zone in Nicosia is just one of the many examples of Europe's endangered heritage. Thousands of lesser-known sites are also in imminent danger. With each element of tangible or intangible heritage that disappears, the foundation of our European House loses some of its strength. With each heritage site that is lost, we lose another building block of the European project. We cannot risk losing many more.

To forge a more cohesive and prosperous Europe, while understanding and preserving our collective and individual memory and cultural inheritance, we need a New Heritage Deal for Europe, an ambitious heritage-led transformation of the European project based on its

citizens' sense of cultural and historic belonging. I firmly believe that this idea can be incorporated in the far-reaching recovery plans for Europe's society and economy following the global pandemic's devastating impact on our lives and livelihoods. As was so clearly stated in the 2020 Europe Day Manifesto *Cultural Heritage: a powerful catalyst for the future of Europe*, overcoming this unprecedented crisis opens new horizons and avenues for a fairer, greener and better Europe, based on international solidarity and on the proper care of our shared cultural heritage and values.

“ **The Buffer Zone in Nicosia shows that we need to open our eyes and hearts before our minds can change.** ”

OUR CULTURAL HERITAGE PROVIDES A BRIDGE  
BETWEEN EUROPE'S PAST, PRESENT AND FUTURE  
(IRON BRIDGE, SHROPSHIRE, UK, EU/EUROPA  
NOSTRA AWARD WINNER 2020).





## NOTES

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- [1] Hermann Parzinger.
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- [2] Europa Nostra was founded in 1963 in Paris and brings together 340 member and associate organisations, including non-governmental and professional associations, foundations, museums, public bodies, universities, historic cities and villages, as well as nearly 1 000 individuals in over 40 countries.
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- [3] Paris Manifesto "Relançons l'Europe par la culture et le patrimoine culturel!" (2019)
- 
- [4] <https://www.iccrom.org/projects/heritage-and-wellbeing-what-constitutes-good-life>
- 
- [5] European Heritage Alliance Manifesto "Cultural Heritage: a powerful catalyst for the future of Europe" (2020)  
[https://www.europanostra.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/05/20200509\\_EUROPE-DAY-MANIFESTO.pdf](https://www.europanostra.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/05/20200509_EUROPE-DAY-MANIFESTO.pdf)
- 
- [6] [https://ec.europa.eu/commission/presscorner/detail/en/AC\\_20\\_1916](https://ec.europa.eu/commission/presscorner/detail/en/AC_20_1916)
- 
- [7] [https://ec.europa.eu/commission/presscorner/detail/en/SPEECH\\_20\\_1655](https://ec.europa.eu/commission/presscorner/detail/en/SPEECH_20_1655)
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- [9] Cultural Heritage Counts For Europe Report (2015) produced by Europa Nostra, ENCATC, Heritage Europe, the Heritage Alliance, the International Cultural Centre and the Raymond Lemaire International Centre for Conservation at the University of Leuven.
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- [10] <https://www.europarl.europa.eu/factsheets/en/sheet/126/tourism>
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- [11] The Cultural and Creative Cities Monitor shows how well 168 selected cities in 30 European countries perform on a range of measures describing "Cultural Vibrancy", the "Creative Economy" and the "Enabling Environment" of a city, using both quantitative and qualitative data.
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- [12] Getting cultural heritage to work for Europe – Report of the Horizon 2020 Expert Group on Cultural Heritage, DG for Research and Innovation 2015.
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- [13] <https://www.europanostra.org/europe-7-most-endangered-heritage-sites-2020-announced/>
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- [14] The 7 Most Endangered programme identifies endangered monuments and sites in Europe and mobilises public and private partners on a local, national and European level to find a viable future for those sites. [7MostEndangered.eu](http://7MostEndangered.eu)
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- [15] [http://7mostendangered.eu/sites\\_country/cyprus/](http://7mostendangered.eu/sites_country/cyprus/)

## BIOGRAPHY

**Prof. Dr Hermann Parzinger** (born 1959 in Munich, Germany) is an archaeologist, historian and cultural heritage expert who, since 2008, has been the President of the Stiftung Preussischer Kulturbesitz (Prussian Cultural Heritage Foundation), one of the world's largest cultural institutions including museums, libraries, archives and research institutes. He studied Prehistoric Archaeology and History and holds a PhD from the Ludwig-Maximilians-Universität in Munich. From 2003 to 2008, he was President of the Deutsches Archäologisches Institut (German Archaeological Institute), and from 2015 to 2018, the Founding Director of the Humboldt Forum, Berlin. Since 1996, he has been teaching at the Freie Universität Berlin.

In 2018, he was appointed, in a voluntary capacity, Executive President of Europa Nostra, a pan-European federation for cultural heritage that represents civil society organisations seeking to safeguard Europe's cultural and natural heritage.

He is also active on the Board of the Stiftung Berliner Philharmoniker; the Convention of Baukultur of the Federal Foundation of Baukultur; the Founding Directorate of the Humboldt Forum, Berlin; the Research Board of the Austrian Academy of Sciences; the Conseil International du Musée des Civilisations de l'Europe et de la Méditerranée (MuCEM), Marseille; the Senate of the Deutsche Nationalstiftung; and the International Advisory Board of the State Hermitage Museum, St. Petersburg.

He has led archaeological field projects in Spain, Turkey, Siberia, Mongolia, Kazakhstan, Uzbekistan, Tajikistan and Iran and is still actively pursuing research activities. He is a member of Academies of Sciences in Germany, Great Britain, Spain, Russia, Romania, China and the United States, and has received multiple awards, medals and other academic honours in Germany, Italy, Russia and Spain. He regularly publishes on a wide variety of subject areas, including archaeology, history, cultural heritage and cultural and academic policy issues.





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