Rhetoric of unity and cultural diversity in the making of European cultural identity

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The fundamental aim in the cultural policy of the EU is to emphasize the obvious cultural diversity of Europe, while looking for some underlying common elements which unify the various cultures in Europe. Through these common elements, the EU policy produces 'an imagined cultural community' of Europe, which is 'united in diversity' as one of the slogans of the union states. This discourse characterizes various documents which are essential in the European cultural policy, such as the Treaty of Lisbon, the European Agenda for Culture and the EU's decision on the European Capital of Culture program. In addition, the discourse is applied to the production of cultural events in European Capitals of Culture in practice. On all levels of the EU´s cultural policy, the rhetoric of European cultural identity and its 'unitedness in diversity' is related with the ideas and practices of fostering common cultural heritage.

Keywords: cultural identity; the European Union; heritage.

European cultural identity in the making

One of the main aims of the European Union has been to strengthen the unification of its member states in the areas of economics, trade and labor market. However, similar aims can also be found from the rhetoric of the EU's cultural policy. The fundamental aim in the cultural policy of the EU is to stress the obvious cultural diversity of Europe and at the same time find some underlying common elements which unify the diverse cultures of Europe. Through these common elements the EU policy produces an imagined cultural community of Europe (Sassatelli 2002, p. 436), which is 'united in diversity' as one of the slogans of the union states.

The aim of this article is to analyze the production of European cultural identity in the EU's cultural policy. In addition, the article explores how the rhetoric of the policy is put to practice in the production of cultural events. The analysis in the article is based on four cases, which manifest the policy on four different levels. These cases are: the Treaty of Lisbon (the principle agreement of the European Union), the European Agenda for Culture (the resolution of the European Council which encapsulates the main cultural aims of the EU), EU's program on European Capital of Culture (the longest running cultural program of the EU applied in each member state in their turn)[1] and promotional material and program of Pécs as the European Capital of Culture (ECC) in 2010. The main question is: How is the concept of European cultural identity produced in these cases, and what kind of cultural hierarchies and ideologies are included in this production?

The cases are explored with a discursive approach that enables the analysis of meaning-making processes, as well as the construction of abstract concepts, such as 'unitedness' or 'diversity' of European cultural identity. The theoretical background of the article arises from approaches of social constructionism, which emphasize reality as constructions produced in language, interaction and social practices. In social constructionism language is not just an instrument in communication, but is seen as producing, justifying and changing actual practices (Shotter 1993, p. 6-10, 99-101, Gergen 1999). Methodically discourse studies rely on the theoretical formulations of social constructionism. Even though discourse studies include several different orientations, a common point of view is in the

emphasis placed on the constructed character of social entities, relations and phenomena. In the analysis some discourses are seen to produce one version of reality, while some others produce another (Fairclough 1992a, p. 3-4). Critical emphasis in discourse analysis stresses linguistic choices as a use of power (Foucault 1972, Fairclough 1992b, p. 8-9, 2001, p. 36-63). In this article I will define discourse as a particular way of representing reality. These representations, which are expressed in EU´s documents, and in the promotional material and program of Pécs as the ECC, construct Europe, Europeanness and European cultural identity and the ideas, mental images, notions and expectations related to them, in a complex way. These representations also indicate the power positions and hierarchies intertwined in the use of language and meaning-making processes. The analytical model in the article is built using the empirical data as a basis. The model reflects the previous studies on the rhetoric of the European cultural identity, but broadens their findings from the discursive point of view. Particularly the analysis aims to indicate how the concept of cultural heritage is used in the rhetoric of the EU as a marker of cultural unity and diversity in Europe.

In discourse studies, the concept of text usually refers to a larger category than just spoken and written communication. It can be understood in the broader Barthesian sense to also contain visual representations, objects and other meaningful 'language' (Barthes 1973). Norman Fairclough has even used the concept of semiosis instead of text in his theory of discourse analysis to emphasise the complex and manifold character of meaningful expressions or 'language' (Fairclough 2004a, Fairclough 2004b, p. 112). In this article, a discursive approach is used for analysing the empirical material. This material consists of the Treaty of Lisbon, the European Agenda for Culture, the official web page of European Commission, the EU's decisions on the ECC, the Guide for cities applying for the title of European Capital of Culture, the ECC application of Pécs, the ECC Program of Pécs, and promotional brochures and the official web page of Pécs as the ECC. All of these materials, in addition to their communicative use, are perceived as contributing to the production of discourses. The analysis of the material requires consideration of their genre. The official EU documents are written in an administrative language, which includes various abstract expressions. Instead of concrete suggestions, the documents bring to the fore idealistic and political rhetoric, which is in many cases created as a compromise to include various contradictory views. In addition to other promotional material the application book tends to market the city or location in a positive and distinguishable way and to present visions and draw outlines of the events and venues. Despite the differences of the genres, the same discourses penetrate the documents in the empirical data.

All the documents in the empirical data include strong ideological rhetoric. In general the EU´s cultural policy is based on ideological goals, which are being communicated more or less directly through various decisions, implementation instructions and evaluation reports of the EU´s cultural programs. As a consequence the ideological emphasis in the policy produces certain coherence to the communicative practises of the EU. In addition, the consequences also reach the local and regional levels. As in the case of the ECC program, the application books, programs and promotional material of the nominated cities reflect the ideological rhetoric of the EU, sometimes even in the details, because it is a prerequisite for a nomination (Lähdesmäki 2008).

Various scholars (Hall 1990, 1992, Bhabha 1994, Bolhman 2009) have emphasized the meaning of culture for the constitution of identity. Identities have been interpreted as being manifested and located in culture, language and history. With the concept of cultural identity, scholars have referred to common historical experiences and cultural codes, which are being repeated in communities through various myths, narratives and symbols (Hall, 1990, Giesen 1991). Besides the emphasis on the experience of unity through these experiences and codes, the concept of cultural identity stresses the significance of distinctions for the construction of identities (Hall 1990). Cultural identities are created through a constant dialogue, negotiation and contest of similarity and difference, sameness and distinction. The constructed and multilayered nature of cultural identity is a fundamental point of departure for understanding such phenomena. Cultural identities can be understood as processes taking various forms with respect to a particular time, place and discourse (Hall 1990, 1992).

Cultural phenomena are both manifestations of cultural identities and spaces of negotiations and contests where their contents and meanings are formed.

In this article, Europeanness is understood as a discursive cultural identity, which is being produced and narrated in various official and unofficial circumstances. The article focuses on exploring the official production of European cultural identity in the EU´s cultural policy. In addition, the article analyses what kind of cultural manifestations the policy practically produces in the context of the ECC, and how the European cultural identity is materialized in these manifestations.

Three discourses – 'unity', 'diversity' and 'united in diversity'

Europeanness has been approached in various ways in academic, political and everyday discussions. Besides cultural aspects, the ideas about Europeanness include political, moral and pragmatic meanings. In this article, I focus on the attempts to encapsulate the cultural meanings of Europeanness. In the past few decades, Europeanness has been actively discussed and explored in the academia. These discussions and studies reflect the paradigmatic turn in human sciences. This turn has been characterized as linguistic, narrative or cultural, thus referring to its social constructionist ideas of laying emphasis on narration, the use of language, and cultural phenomena as locations, in which meanings are both consciously and unconsciously produced (Fornäs 1995, Mitchell 1994, p. 11-17, Pulkkinen 1998, p. 51). Since 1980s, various influential scholars have stressed constructivist approaches in the study of nationalism. Benedict Anderson´s concept of 'imagined communities' and Eric Hobsbawn´s notion on 'invented traditions' have been applied in various studies on nations (Anderson 1983, Hobsbawn 1983). Similar approaches have also been applied to analyzing Europe and Europeanness. During the 1980s emerged a new wave of studies on Europe reflecting the 'invention' of Europe (Sassatelli 2002, p. 437). In addition, scholars got interested in exploring the 'Europanization' of discourses and practices in various fields of society. As Harmsen and Wilson (2000) note, in these studies the term of 'Europanization' has been used in various contexts referencing the production, formulation and outlining of Europe and in various discourses and practices defining the contents of the concept of Europe.

The new wave of studies on Europe has occurred at the same time with various practical initiatives aiming at the creation of Europe. The European Union has had various attempts to make the European cultural identity more concrete. The EU has promoted a set of symbolic initiatives directed at creating a sense of common belonging that range from a flag to an anthem, a new ritual calendar and a common currency. (Bee 2008.) These kind of initiatives are familiar as parts of nation(state)-building practices. Because of this link scholars have explored the relationship between European and national identities. The conclusions, however, vary greatly: the relationship has been seen either as inclusive or exclusive and at times the different dimensions of identities have been interpreted to be combined in complex ways.

The academic and political discussions on European cultural identity are often characterized by varying emphasis on interpreted unity or diversity of European culture(s) (see e.g. Sassatelli 2009). The different emphases are explored in this article as three different discourses. The discourse of unity stresses the idea of common cultural roots, history and heritage as a concrete base for coherence in European cultural identity. The idea of Europe as a mentally or culturally unified continent is profoundly old – the image of a mentally unified continent was created already in the beginning of the modern era, in the 16th century. Under the threat of Turks, the mental image of Europe as a common home was brought forth in various texts (Mikkeli 1994, p. 185). In general, the definitions of common Europeanness have usually culminated in periods during which the continent has been under a threat. Europe and Europeanness have always been formulated through negations and threats – whether the threat of Turks, Russians, Germans, American or Asian economic powers, or Islam. (Mikkeli 1994, p. 188-189.)

In different phases of history, Europe has been paralleled e.g. to civilization, Christianity, democracy, freedom, human rights, reason, whiteness, mild climate or the West (Mikkeli 1994, p. 161). Along the history, various adjuncts have been explained to characterize the unity of Europeans. Still in the 20th century, the views on common identity and shared destiny have been explained to descend e.g. from the Greek sprit and the Hellenic rationality and beauty, the Roman law and administration, and the Christian religion (e.g. Valéry 1927, de Rougemont 1966). In addition, the modernism of the 18th and 19th century has been explained both as a creation of Europe and as a creator of Europe. Modernism brought fundamental changes to world views, politics and social circumstances, which have been seen as having an effect on the construction of modern European identity. (Heller 1992.)

The discourse which outlines some common and shared elements as a base for European cultural identity often refers to the continuity of history, the legacy of the past and old traditions. In this discourse the present-day is seen as descending from the 'Great Past', which on one hand has cultivated the present state of the common culture, and on the other hand obliges to foster the history of the common culture. In this romantic point of view, the notion of culture refers to high culture and thus emphasizes the preservation of old high cultural objects. Culture is seen as a positive, uplifting and developing entity, which does not include conflicts, dominance or subordination.

As a critique to the previous point of view, various scholars and politics have emphasized the multifaceted variety of cultures as the main character of European cultural identity. European cultures are considered to be characterized by their plurality, and the European cultural identity is thus seen as manifold and plural. This discourse of diversity often stresses the idea of 'Europe of regions' in which Europe is seen as being constructed of regions, counties and cities – that is, smaller units than sovereign nation-states (Mikkeli 1994, p. 190). In recent years, several studies have referred to these ideas as the 'localisation of Europe' or 'Europeanisation of the local' (Johler 2002, p. 9). Diversity in European cultural identity refers in this discourse to the diversity of local and regional in addition to national cultures in Europe. In this discourse, the EU is given the task of protecting Europe´s cultural diversity and the diffuse knowledge about cultures in Europe (Sassatelli 2002, p. 439).

In the discourse of diversity, culture is not given the role of a common unifier of Europe. Common culture is not seen as a starting point for European integration or the feeling of belonging. Therefore various scholars have pointed out the nature of Europeanness as a civic identity (Delanty 1995a, 2000, Orchard 2002). Gerard Delanty criticizes particularly the paralleling of European identity and the notion of high culture. In his point of view this kind of paralleling is profoundly nostalgic and essentialist. His criticism focuses on the idea of Europe as a continent defined by high cultural past and shared traditions, which are seen influencing the Europe´s present condition as a whole (Delanty 1995a, 1995b, 2000.) Instead Delanty brings to the fore how culture has become a site for new conflicts over identity politics in Europe (Delanty 2000, p. 234.) Some scholars have also stressed how outlining the Europeanness and citizenship in cultural terms has led to racism and xenophobia (Orchard 2002, p. 429). That has led others to argue for a political approach in outlining Europe and Europeanness. In general, scholars have distinguished the civic/political dimension of European identity from a more culturally-based/affective dimension in the formation of European identity (Bruter 2004, 2005).

However, also the views which stress civic/political dimension of European identity have been criticized as insufficient. In these critical views, culture is seen as essential for a sense of common belonging. A purely political idea of the citizenship is experienced as too abstract and it has been dismissed as an unviable basis for shaping a common identity. Generally in discussions on Europeanness, there is a strong distinction between 'cultural' and 'social' or 'political'. (Orchard 2002, p. 429-430.) In practice these dimensions are often difficult to distinguish.

The most abstract discourse on Europeanness stresses both the unity and the diversity as the key features of European cultural identity – Europeanness is seen to be characterized by the plurality of different cultural units and features, but these cultures are also believed to be connected with some underlying common elements. The principle attempt in this discourse is

to celebrate the differences without homogenizing them. This discourse has been criticized as a formal solution with no substance: it has been seen as a superficial motto that can easily turn into a new version of Eurocentric triumphalism (Sassatelli 2002, p. 440). However, the EU still strongly fosters the rhetoric of its official motto 'united in diversity', even though the recent constitutional crisis has questioned the goals and means of the integration process. The European Constitution Treaty, which was rejected through referendum in 2005, included the list of the official symbols of the EU, such as the motto 'united in diversity'. The list of the official symbols of the EU was cut down from the Treaty of Lisbon. The motto, however, as well as the other main symbols of the EU, is used in various official documents and circumstances in the EU. It seems that the more the integration process is undermined, the more the EU aims to stabilize the situation both with the official symbols and the discourse of unity and diversity.

The discourse of unity and diversity is also characterized by the cosmopolitan point of view to Europeanness. European cultural identity is often approached within the frame of cosmopolitan identity. Globalization and internationalism have contributed to the formation of this point of view (Delanty 2006). In addition, this viewpoint stresses the legacy of European history and its cultural heritage. The 'great achievements' of European culture are treated as common cultural heritage and belonging to the shared roots of European identity. Pan-Europanists or cosmopolitans have thus stressed the role of the cosmopolitan aspects of culture in the creation of Europe – even on the administrative level in the European Union – as is suggested e.g. by the selection of Beethoven´s Ode to Joy as the EU´s anthem (Delanty 2000, p. 226).

'Unity' and 'diversity' in the EU documents

The discourse, which stresses both the unity and the diversity in the formation of European cultural identity, characterizes the principle documents related to the EU´s cultural policy. In addition, it is used in practice in various actions in the EU´s cultural program. These two aims, the unity and the diversity – which can even be interpreted as contradictory to each other – are encapsulated in the following description in the web page of the European Commission:

> Facilitating the flowering of Member States' cultures, with all that entails in terms national and regional diversity, is an important EU treaty objective. In order to simultaneously bring our common heritage to the fore and recognise the contribution of all cultures present in our societies, cultural diversity needs to be nurtured in a context of openness and exchanges between different cultures. However, in societies that are ever more multicultural, this diversity requires greater mutual understanding and respect. (European Commission, Culture, Cultural diversity and intercultural dialogue).[2]

In the quotation the contents of 'diversity' are discussed with the terms of national and regional cultures and multicultural societies. The unity is encapsulated to the idea of a common heritage. The cultural heritage is an ambiguous and easily politicized concept. The contents of the concept vary, and it has been put to practice in various ways. The Council of Europe (2005) has defined the concept as follows:

> (…) cultural heritage is a group of resources inherited from the past which people identify, independently of ownership, as a reflection and expression of their constantly evolving values, beliefs, knowledge and traditions. It includes all aspects of the environment resulting from the interaction between people and places through time.

Besides the vague concept of heritage, the EU policy has even been criticized for the failure of properly define what is meant by 'culture' in different contexts (Gordon 2010).

The two objectives – fostering diversity and common cultural heritage – are tightly intertwined into the current grounding document of the EU, the Treaty of Lisbon. The treaty has been created by 'drawing inspiration from the cultural, religious and humanist inheritance of Europe, from which have developed the universal values of the inviolable and inalienable rights of the human person, freedom, democracy, equality and the rule of law' and 'desiring to deepen the solidarity between their peoples while respecting their history, their culture and their traditions'. (Treaty of Lisbon, article 1.) The fundamental point of departure in the treaty is to outline 'the common mental background' of Europe and to explain it as an inheritance, which has generated various 'universal values'. In the treaty, Europe is produced as a 'home' for various universal virtues and a sense of justice. Cultural and religious (meaning Christian) inheritance is seen as an unquestioned source of positive influences to human life. The rhetoric developed from this kind of point of departure is both nostalgic and idealistic.

The cultural heritage is stressed in several articles of the Treaty of Lisbon. Even though the cultural diversity is seen important to foster, only the cultural heritage is seen worthwhile to protect. As it is formulated in the treaty: '[the Union] shall respect its rich cultural and linguistic diversity, and shall ensure that Europe's cultural heritage is safeguarded and enhanced' (Treaty of Lisbon, article 3). Even though the protection of cultural heritage is seen as profoundly important, the actual order of values comes clear in later articles. The EU stresses the 'aid to promote culture and heritage conservation where such aid does not affect trading conditions and competition in the Union to an extent that is contrary to the common interest' (Treaty of Lisbon, article 107). Cultural values are preceded by economic value.

Similar viewpoints also characterize the European Agenda for Culture. According to the agenda, 'culture and its specificity, including multilingualism are key elements of the European integration process based on common values and a common heritage – a process which recognizes, respects and promotes cultural diversity and the transversal role of culture' (Resolution 2007/C 287/01). The European integration process is intertwined to 'common values and heritage'. According to the agenda, respecting cultural diversity is an essential part of the integration process. Nevertheless, the integration is seen as something generating from the common elements that unify Europe. Even though the agenda stresses cultural diversity and the importance of respecting it, these attempts could also be interpreted as instruments, or phases, in the creation of cultural coherence and common European cultural heritage.

One of the three strategic objectives in the European Agenda for Culture is 'the promotion of cultural diversity and intercultural dialogue'. This objective includes in addition an aim of 'promoting cultural heritage, namely by facilitating the mobility of collections and fostering the process of digitisation, with a view to improving public access to different forms of cultural and linguistic expressions' (Resolution 2007/C 287/01). In the rhetoric of the agenda, promoting cultural diversity and cultural heritage are even paralleled. Through circulating exhibitions and increasing the access to cultural heritage, the diverse regional and national heritage is 'Europanized': it is made known and recognized in Europe and, thus, represented as European. Another aim in the above mentioned objective is 'promoting intercultural dialogue as a sustainable process contributing to European identity, citizenship and social cohesion, including by the development of the intercultural competences of citizens' (Resolution 2007/C 287/01). Intercultural dialogue and intercultural competences of people are emphasised because of their influence on increasing the social cohesion. (Positive) interaction between cultures is seen as something that will produce a common European identity. Thus the creation of a common European identity seems to form an underlying principle in the agenda. However, in the agenda, the creation of European identity and the strengthening of social cohesion through culture are also seen as instruments for more significant purposes. The starting point in the agenda is 'stressing that culture and creativity are important drivers for personal development, social cohesion, economic growth, creation of jobs, innovation and competitiveness' (Resolution 2007/C 287/01). Economic values thus determine the cultural agenda.

The objectives of the ECC program obey the discursive context of the EU´s cultural policy: unity and diversity are intertwined as fundamental principles in the celebrations of the

ECC. The objectives of the ECC program are described in the Guide for cities applying for the title of European Capital of Culture (2009) as follows:

> Over the years, this event has evolved without losing sight of its primary objective: to highlight the richness and diversity of European cultures and the features they share, promote greater mutual acquaintance between European citizens, and encourage a sense of belonging to the same "European" community.

The rhetoric of the guide parallels the diversity and the richness, and emphasizes the creation of a sense of belonging, which is obtained through highlighting the common features in cultures and a better knowledge of the cultural features of others.

This discourse, which emphasizes both the unity and the diversity as the principle elements of European cultural identity, inevitably includes a strong ideological dimension. The discourse rhetorically outlines the contents and values of European cultural identity. In the discourse, the concept of diversity particularly refers to both the local, regional and national cultures and to the cultural characteristics of various minorities and immigrants in Europe. As the guide (2009) clarifies: 'This diversity also refers to the cultural input from all the resident populations of migrants or new arrivals from European countries and beyond.' However, the common features of European cultures are mostly searched for in the traditions and manifestations of the local, regional and national cultures. This intention is emphasized in the EU´s instructions for the ECC candidate cities. The cities have been advised to 'highlight artistic movements and styles shared by Europeans which it has inspired or to which it has made a significant contribution' (Decision 1419/1999/EC), and to 'bring the common aspects of European cultures to the fore' (Decision 1622/2006/EC). These instructions seem to indicate fostering the cultures of 'original' Europeans as a base for creation of a common European cultural identity.

Paralleling the local, regional and national cultures and the cultures of 'resident populations of migrants and new arrivals' in the discussions on cultural diversity brings forth new challenges. In this rhetoric, the local and regional traditions and the traditions of migrants are both seen as elements which produce the cultural diversity. Only the latter is often related to the creation of cultural diversity in everyday discussions. In general, the concept of diversity is seen in this kind of rhetoric as an unproblematic and stimulating condition (Lähdesmäki 2010).

The emphasis of cultural diversity as one of the main objectives of the ECC program is, paradoxically, to produce common European cultural identity and even foster European (cultural) integration. The guide (2009) stresses the importance of creating a feeling of belonging to the same (European) community:

> One of the key objectives of the event is to foster the knowledge which European citizens may have of one another and at the same time to create a feeling of belonging to the same community. In this respect, the overall vision of the event must be European, and the programme must have an appeal at European level.

The decision of the ECC program is even more straightforward in its rhetoric: 'this initiative is important both for strengthening local and regional identity and for fostering European integration' (Decision 1419/1999EC).

According to the guide, the 'European dimension' which is stressed in the ECC program, can be realised either on the level of a common European theme or as a way in which the events are organised. The European dimension in the organization of events refers to joint projects between institutions, cultural operators and artists from different European countries, or to events which involve some European institutions and their policies (Guide for cities applying for the title of European Capital of Culture, 2009). The contents of the European theme are more problematic to outline. The guide advises the cities to focus on the European theme in the following way:

> […] candidate cities must present the role they have played in European culture, their links with Europe, their place in it and their sense of belonging. They must also demonstrate their current participation in European artistic and cultural life, alongside their own specific features. This European dimension may also be designed and perceived by the cities through the dialogue and exchange which they establish with other cultures and artists from other continents, so as to foster intercultural dialogue.

The underlying strategy is to get the cities to present themselves as a part of the common European cultural identity. Through the ECC program, the cultural integration process of Europe, however, seems to be generated as a bottom-up process starting from the cities and their local and regional institutions and the citizens themselves, even though the direction of the process is the opposite. The aims for the European cultural integration are set up in the ECC program and following these aims is the prerequisite for the cities to be nominated as an ECC.

In the EU´s ECC documents, the 'European dimension' is often described in terms of cultural heritage. The decision on the ECC in year 1999 was formed on the bases of an Eurocentric idea of exceptional European cultural history: '[…] throughout its history, Europe has been the site of exceptionally prolific and varied artistic activity; whereas urban life has played a major role in the growth and influence of the European cultures' (Decision 1419/1999EC). The whole Europe is explained to share the past of an extraordinary quality of culture. The chosen ECC cities were expected to foster this common cultural history and heritage by linking the city´s own cultural heritage to the common European narrative. This idea is expressed in the decision as follows:

> Each city shall organise a programme of cultural events highlighting the city's own culture and cultural heritage as well as its place in the common cultural heritage, and involving people concerned with cultural activities from other European countries with a view to establishing lasting cooperation. (Decision 1419/1999EC).

Even though the Guide for cities applying for the title of European Capital of Culture (2009) emphasises in the beginning that the ECC program should not only focus on 'architectural heritage' or 'the historical assets of the city', both the decisions on the ECC and the guide itself explicate the expected elements of the ECC program in the terms of cultural and historical heritage. The appendix A of the guide includes a list of good examples of events with a 'European dimension', which have taken place in the previous ECC cities. The represented events are categorized under nine titles, with most of them either directly or indirectly highlighting the significance of heritage in the making of a 'European dimension'. The categories with direct focus on highlighting cultural heritage are: 'Artistic/cultural movements and styles widely shared and known at European level inspired by the city or to which the city has made a significant contribution', 'Identifying and celebrating aspects of European history, identity and heritage which are already present in the designated city/promotion of European public awareness of the figures and events which have marked the history and culture of the city', 'Focusing on the cultural history and traditions of Europe, particular expressions of the European Union', and 'Events that focus on the talents of European artists'. From the first category the guide gives Vilnius as an example:

> Vilnius developed as a Baroque city in terms of cultural identity, on the one hand facing outwards to the Baroque forms of Italy and Central Europe, and on the other facing inwards to the "Vilnius-style" of Baroque expressions, a so-called European Baroque dialect. (Guide for cities applying for the title of European Capital of Culture, 2009).

In the rhetoric of the guide, the local architectural style is viewed as a part of the 'common' European architectural history. Common cultural identity of Europe is formed on the bases of well known cultural historical narrative and the stylistic canon of art.

Besides the cultural heritage, the guide and the ECC decisions both emphasise the significance of important historical figures in the making of a 'European dimension' to the ECC events. Two of the categories in the appendix A of the guide directly indicate the significance of the historical figures. These categories are: 'Artistic/cultural leading figures from the city who became "European" artists by their fame and/or their mobility and role on a European scale' and 'Figures which were/are European but have not become as famous as their colleagues'. Creation of a European canon of Great Men seems to characterise the objectives of the ECC documents. This practice was a typical strategy in nationalist attempts to boost national self-esteem and create a national narration of history and an image of a civilized independent society. As an example of this practice, the guide (2009) takes Lille as an example:

> Lille 2004 organised a large Rubens exhibition to celebrate the work of this painter, which is deeply rooted in the history of Flanders. This artist created many pictures for churches and also for European royal families while taking up diplomatic responsibilities all over Europe. He trained with Flemish masters in Antwerp before moving to Italy for eight years. Rubens' art therefore represented a pan-European identity.

The stress on regional or national heroes as the European Great Men does not however necessarily produce any common European canon of significant historical figures. As the research of Philippe Joutard and Jean Lecuir indicates, the people in different countries of Europe tend to value only their fellow country-men as significant European figures. On regional and national levels, people seem to honour their own regional and national heroes. (Laurent 2003.)

In the rhetoric of the ECC documents, fostering cultural heritage is linked to the creation of a feeling of belonging to a cultural community. As the guide (2009) suggests: 'Promoting the culture, arts and heritage of the city can help to improve the city's image and its inhabitants' relationship with their urban environment.' Participation and creation of a feeling of belonging are the core principles in the ECC program. In fact, in the decision made in 2006, the whole program is divided into two sections: 'European dimension' and 'city and citizens' (Decision 1622/2006/EC). The last section stresses the importance of activating people to participate in the production and use of culture. In general, these two sections are closely related – EU´s aspiration seems to be to produce a European cultural identity through activating the people to participate in cultural events that represent the diversity of 'European culture' in its various forms (Tzaliki 2007).

In the rhetoric of the ECC documents the stress on participation is also linked to economic objectives. Besides advancing social coherence and creating common identity, the ECC events have to attract tourists. As the guide (2009) advices:

> Attractiveness, from local to European level, is one of the main objectives for a Capital of Culture: how can it attract not only the local and national population but also foreign tourists? In the case of a city located in the Baltic countries, for example, the question could be formulated as follows: how could the event be of interest to a Spanish, Greek or Swedish tourist? This is the type of issue with which the candidate cities will be confronted. Any type of strictly local event should therefore be avoided. The promotion of tourism at European level is also one of the challenges of the event.

Instead of local events, tourists are believed to be interested in broader European contents. Thus the cities should promote 'the specific features of the city as elements of European cultural diversity while conveying an attractive image at international level and arousing interest and enthusiasm in the local population' (Guide for cities applying for the title of European Capital of Culture, 2009). As the previous quotations indicate, the ECC program is closely intertwined with the sphere of economics with its emphasis on tourism, place promotion and the fostering of creative industries. The program, which was initiated to increase the meaning of culture and the people's cultural awareness in Europe (Richards and

Wilson 2004, p. 1936; Richards 2000, p. 160), has transformed to a significant economical factor in the local, national and EU policies (Herrero and al. 2006). Various studies have emphasized particularly the significant short-term economical impacts of the ECC program in the nominated cities (Palmer 2004, p. 146-151; Richards and Wilson 2004, p. 1943; Richards 2000, p. 173-175; Richards and Rotariu 2009; García 2004). In general, the EU seeks to promote culture as a catalyst for creativity because of the importance of the cultural sector to the economy. Cultural and creative sectors are believed to foster innovation in other sectors of the economy. In the rhetoric of the EU´s cultural policy, the economical goals and the ideas of cultural democracy are linked without troubles. The economical goals are not presented as challenges in the realization of fostering cultural diversity, or promoting the cultures of different local, regional, national or minority communities or cultural sub-groups.

Stress on cultural heritage

The discourse of unity and diversity is being articulated in the promotional material and program of Pécs as an ECC in 2010. In the promotional material and program the idea of cultural heritage is being taken as a concrete point of departure for the discourse. Abstract and ambiguous concepts related to the common cultural identity and Europeanness are given a concrete form in various cultural projects.

When exploring the ECC cities in the year 2000, Monica Sassatelli (2002, p. 444) noticed that the existence of differences and a feeling of unity were both underlined in the cities. They were however accompanied by a lack of clear vision of what would constitute this common experience, and a positive connotation was given to differences as long as they remained 'cultural'. Sassatelli states that in nine ECC2000 programs, Europe was not really an issue. Instead of Europe and Europeanness, the real focus of attention was on the specificity of the city itself and on big events regardless of their possible European dimensions. European vocation of the city was usually present in the plans of the ECC, but the aspect was a lot less visible in the final programs. (Sassatelli 2002, p. 444.) John Myerscough (1994) has made a similar observation in his study of the first ten years of the European City of Culture program: cities have stressed the differences of European cultures more than they have emphasized the common European dimension. Robert Palmer´s report on the ECC cities (from 1995 to 2004) indicates how the European dimension is seen important in all the nominated cities. However the value given on the European dimension varies. The report suggests that despite of the aims of highlighting the European dimension and events labelled as 'European', the execution and content of the events may not bring to the fore any defined European focus. (Palmer 2004, p. 85-86.)

Study of the promotional material of Pécs2010 reveals that Europe, Europeanness and common European cultural identity are the core concepts of Pécs as the ECC. The objective of the city is to celebrate 'artistic achievements of European standard' (Takáts 2005, p. 11), 'diversity of European and world culture' (Takáts 2005, p. 21), and 'own cultural experience and achievements which are likely to arouse interest in visitors and guests, those aspects of culture which contribute to the heritage of Pan-European culture' (Toller 2005, p. 7). The abstract ideas of unity and diversity of the European cultural identity are clearly present in the promotional material. However, the ideas are also given a concrete content in the material and in the program of Pécs2010. In the program the 'European dimension' is present both on the practical level, referring to the collaboration between artists and other cultural actors from different member states, and in various European themes on the contentual level. The common European themes are not always articulated explicitly as European – they are however often discursively produced as such (Lähdesmäki 2008, p. 8). Thus the exhibitions of art works by famous European artists and the objects of well-know phases of cultural history in Europe can be considered as indicating a European theme. Moreover, in the promotional material and program of Pécs2010, celebrations of local and regional cultural phenomena (such as the secessionist ceramics of the Zsolnay factory and the architecture following the Bauhaus aesthetic) are regarded as European and as elements of the common European

cultural identity. In addition the events presenting minority cultures and intercultural projects can be interpreted as having a European theme. In those events culture is being approached from a supranational perspective, in which the interests are focused on a certain (European) ethnic culture. In the program of Pécs2010 plenty of events focus on the city´s different (ethnic) minority cultures: German, Romany, Croatian, Serbian, Greek, Ruthenian, Romanian and Jewish. In the Guide for cities applying for the title of European Capital of Culture (2009), the last category in the list of good examples of events with a European theme is in fact titled 'Place and role of immigrant cultures in the city'.

The most common way of producing the 'European dimension' in the promotional material of Pécs2010 is highlighting the significance of the cultural heritage of the city. The cultural heritage is treated both as a manifestation of belonging to the common European cultural identity, and as an indication of variety in the cultural identity, which is explained as characteristic to Europe. Thus the discourse of unity and diversity of European cultural identity is being put to practice. In the ECC application book 'Pécs´s cultural image' is presented with emphasis on the manifold cultural heritage of the city. The cultural heritage of Pécs is presented in relation to 'five large European spatial cultural regions and five temporal historical-cultural layers' (Takáts 2005, p. 9). All these spatial regions (the Central-European German cultural region, the (Ottoman) Balkan region, the multilingual world of the former Austro-Hungarian Monarchy, the Latin-Italian Mediterranean region and the vast region of East-Central European socialism) and temporal regions (Early Christian-Roman, Medieval, Classicist, the middle-class culture of the second half of the nineteenth century, the modern art of the twentieth century) are said to be manifested in the cultural heritage sites and the architecture of the city. Besides the heritage sites and the architecture, the promotional material and the program of Pécs2010 emphasize the various historical figures related to these temporal layers. In addition the heritage sites often function as locations where events, which are focused on immaterial heritage such as folk and ethic music, dance or other performances, take place.

The visual discourse in the promotional material of Pécs2010 also stresses the imagery of the cultural heritage. The material is illustrated with various images of classical architecture around the city, classical architectural details and decorations, and public monuments and sculptures. For example in the application book 31% of the images illustrate architecture, architectural details or city views focused on architecture, 19% of the images present public sculptures and monuments or their details, and 12 % other works of art. In a brochure titled Borderless City [2009], the numbers are 48%, 18% and 2%. These kinds of imageries invoke a sense of high culture, and specifically high European culture. As Aiello and Thurlow (2006, p. 158) have noticed in their research on web sites of the ECC, these kind of images also inscribe the notion that culture may be reduced to material artifacts, spaces and practices. Cultural heritage might as well be added to the list.

In fact the emphasis on architecture and architectural heritage sites is an often used strategy in manifesting Europeanness. EU´s search for a cultural identity is manifested, for example, in the architectural designs on the Euro banknotes. (Delanty & Jones 2002, Aeillo & Thurlow 2006, p. 154, Bohlman 2009). In the discourse that stresses the cultural unity in Europe, architecture is often seen as a common identity marker. For example Delanty and Jones (2002, p. 453-454) state that:

> Architecture has thus been the quintessentially universalistic expression of civilization since all the great architectural designs – classical Greek, Romanesque, Renaissance, Gothic, Baroque, Rococo, Modernist – have been universalistic in their self-understanding and one of the most important expressions of European civilization transcending the particularism of its national cultures.

Seeing the canonized architectural styles as shared heritage of Europe is, however, misleading. The canon of architectural styles follows the ideal matrix created in the West-European academia by art historians. The canon recognizes only the most typical, ideal and monumental buildings, which in many cases form only selected and temporarily and spatially

limited expressions of architecture. As Aiello and Thurlow (2006, p. 158) remark, European cultural identity is often generated through appeals to an ancient or classical past, which is produced by stressing certain themes and 'parts' of Europe. Representing these 'parts' as common European culture, is a profoundly exclusive strategy: heritage of a particular temporal or spatial unit is narrated as shared by all contemporary citizens in Europe.

Conclusions

On all discussed levels of the EU´s cultural policy, the rhetoric of European cultural identity and it´s 'unitedness in diversity' is intertwined to the ideas and practices of fostering the European cultural heritage. Diversity is often seen in the frame of Europe´s multifaceted heritage by referring to history and legacy. Particularly architecture and the (art) historically canonized architectural sites, monuments and styles are believed to manifest the European cultural heritage. The cultural heritage is not only seen as bearing the legacy of separate European nations or ethnic or regional groups, but manifesting the memory and heritage of all Europeans. Fostering the diversity (and paradoxically the commonness at the same time) in European culture(s) is expected to produce a dialogue and understanding between the people, a participation in cultural events and finally, a belonging to the common 'European culture'.

The recent and the planned enlargements of the EU have caused a situation in which the EU is forced to redefine itself in relation to its geographical and cultural boundaries. The governing bodies in the EU and the member states will probably continue the discussion on the criteria of the status of the label 'European'. As Aiello and Thurlow (2006, p. 149) predict, the governing bodies have to manage the tension between keeping 'Europeanness' sufficiently inclusive to serve the flexibility demanded by global capital, while simultaneously sustaining the sense of exclusivity necessary for making a collective European identity meaningful to European citizens. The stress on heritage sites, monuments and architecture seem to indicate that cultural heritage is seen as broad but also a distinguishing enough phenomena to suit these aims.

In fact this kind of emphasis on common cultural heritage in the production of Europeanness can be interpreted as a reflection of the past colonialist ideology (see Palonen 2010). Historical monuments, buildings and other architectural sites located in certain cities, regions and member-states are explained in the rhetoric of the EU´s cultural policy as common and shared heritage of all Europeans. In a sense the heritage is colonized by the EU for its identity political purposes. As the article indicates, through the ECC nomination the EU gets the nominated cities to follow this rhetoric. Through the ECC program, the search for common European cultural identity seems to generate as a bottom-up process starting from the cities and their local and regional institutions and the citizens themselves, even though the direction of the process is the opposite.

Stressing architecture, monuments and heritage sites is a seemingly neutral way to draw attention to the cultural unity and diversity of Europe. However, stressing the cultural unity and diversity from this stand point is profoundly ideological - the focus of the rhetoric is both demarcating and distinctive. The rhetoric tends to emphasize the heritage of 'original' Europeans and the leading social strata, and draws attention from the cultural and social problems of the present day cultural diversity and status of 'European' to the variety and commonness of styles and aesthetics of the past time.

Notes

[1] The EU started to select European Cities of Culture in 1985. Since 1999, the chosen cities have been called European Capitals of Culture. In this article, I focus particularly on the EU´s decisions on the European Capital of Culture program since 1999.
[2] The formulation of the text in the quotation is based on the texts in the Treaty of Lisbon.

Similar formulations can also be found already from the Treaty of Maastricht (1992).

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