



# Património e desenvolvimento territorial. O que é que o património representa realmente?

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# HERITAGE AND TERRITORIAL DEVELOPMENT

DOMINIQUE CROZAT\*

**Resumo:** O conceito de Património está relacionado com a noção de desenvolvimento territorial, enquanto ferramenta promotora do desenvolvimento de uma comunidade territorial. Esta afirmação não carece apenas de confirmação, como parece demonstrar, acima de tudo, um grande paradoxo nas nossas sociedades. De facto, esta reivindicação fundamenta-se em algo que está por dizer: o desenvolvimento territorial é acompanhado pelo desenvolvimento económico. Contudo, podemos pensar igualmente noutras funções que, em termos apelativos (residenciais ou turísticos) e de atração de atividades de substancial valor-acrescentado, desempenham um papel importante que, no entanto, e numa perspetiva económica, permanece indireto. Num segundo plano, o Património é indiscutivelmente benéfico do ponto de vista económico, particularmente através do turismo e atividades de lazer. Contudo, ao nível direto, uma vez contabilizados os custos sociais gerados, o retorno do investimento é indiscutivelmente pobre. Como tal, sugerimos que o valor territorial de Património deva ser considerado em duas outras configurações complementares que possam justificar aquilo que, à primeira vista, possa aparentar ser um desperdício ou uma despesa extravagante: em primeiro lugar, a criação de uma ideologia territorial. Este conceito procura ter em conta as várias dimensões do papel desempenhado pela retórica coletiva na harmonização do território. Para além disso, esta dimensão discursiva é também uma importante ferramenta de governação que atribui coerência às políticas de estruturação territorial: o Património é tema de acesos debates, potencia o desenvolvimento de uma identidade territorial e justifica outras ações que emergem do planeamento destes espaços.

**Palavras-chave:** Património; Desenvolvimento territorial; Ideologia territorial; “Hiper real”.

**Abstract:** The concept of heritage is linked to the notion of territorial development, a tool promoting the development of a territorial community. Not only does this claim need to be confirmed, but it seems above all to highlight a major paradox in our societies. This assertion is in fact based initially on something left unsaid: territorial development brings economic development; yet, one can think of few other functions which, in terms of appeal (residential or touristic), attraction of substantial value-added activities, play a role which is important yet remains indirect from an economic perspective. Indeed, at a secondary level, heritage is undoubtedly economically

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beneficial, in particular through tourism and leisure activities. But, directly, once all the social costs it generates are taken into account, the fact remains that the return on investment is rather poor. We therefore suggest that the territorial value of heritage must be considered in two other complementary configurations that would justify what may, at first glance, appear to be a waste or a lavish expenditure: firstly, the creation of a territorial ideology. This concept seeks to take into account the various dimensions of the role played by the collective rhetoric in harmonising the territory. Moreover, this discursive dimension is also a major governance tool that provides coherence to territory-structuring policies: heritage is the subject of lively debates, foster the development of a territorial identity and justify other actions that emerge from the planning of these spaces.

**Keywords:** Heritage; Territorial development; Territorial ideology; Hyperreal.

## INTRODUCTION: HERITAGE – JUST A LAVISH EXPENDITURE?

For the last 30 years, the concept of heritage has been linked to the notion of territorial development, the idea being that the former is meant to be a tool promoting the development of the latter. Not only does this claim need to be confirmed, but it seems above all to highlight a major paradox in our societies.

This assertion is in fact based initially on a shortcut, something left unsaid: territorial development brings economic development; yet, one can think of few other functions which, in terms of appeal (residential or touristic), play a role which is important yet remains indirect from an economic perspective. And in the context of postmodern economies, this kind of appeal proves instrumental in attracting substantial value-added activities, high-level companies (in particular in the technology industry) and executives able to run these structures...

Indeed, at a secondary level, heritage is undoubtedly economically beneficial, in particular through tourism and leisure activities (Fig. 1). From this perspective, once all the social costs it generates are taken into account, the fact remains that the return on investment is rather poor: although increasing steadily, attendance at heritage sites remains unprofitable, with the exception of a few large sites (and in their case, attendance has been stagnating or declining in recent years).

Furthermore, it is above all the spinoffs (mainly for hotels and restaurants) which prove to be very profitable and warrant the relevance of a very expensive heritage protection policy, in particular regarding public space planning, traffic (access, car parks, etc.) or the removal of aerial networks (electricity, telephone). Elsewhere, the development of small heritage sites (fountains, wash houses, streets...), mainly initiated by local authorities and associations, is comparatively even more costly and offers no possibility of any return on investment (paid admissions for example). The prominent place held by natural heritage is proving equally costly, both in terms of the specific investments required (e.g. relocation of power lines) and their sheer size due to the scaling-up that it induces, but also in terms of the

discontent generated by the constraints it imposes (restrictions on agricultural production, limits on land available for development and increased land prices), whereas direct economic benefits are extremely limited: only a few sites worldwide can charge for admiring the landscape.

We therefore suggest that the territorial value of heritage be considered in two other complementary configurations that would justify what may, at first glance, appear to be a waste or, at least, a lavish expenditure: firstly, the creation of a territorial ideology. This recent concept seeks to take into account the various dimensions of the role played by the collective rhetoric in harmonising the territory. Moreover, this discursive dimension is not only the expression of a 'we'

in a local narcissistic, if not chauvinistic, way. It is also a major governance tool that provides coherence to territory-structuring policies: heritage is the subject of lively debates, especially on its usefulness, its cost but above all of an aesthetic and political nature which, because of the appetite and collective values they generate, foster the development of a territorial identity and justify other actions that emerge from the planning of these spaces.

This will finally lead us to also question the ways with which this granting of heritage status is implemented by pointing to the empowerment capacity of contemporary heritage in relation to the historical and cultural foundations on which it is based and which give it legitimacy.

## BUILDING A TERRITORIAL IDEOLOGY

Heritage is part of what Di Meo<sup>1</sup> calls the cultural body of a socio-spatial formation, the collective debate on the production of cultural values and standards



Fig. 1. Often, tourism and agritourism are the main economic return from heritage. In the mountain of the center of France, here at Saugues, because of a rough climate, agriculture is poor; the main production is lentil... The patrimonialisation of the lentil leads to the only protected geographical indication (AOP) of lentil in Europe and, perhaps, the world. There are also craft beers made from local products: lentil, verbena, honey, raspberry, blueberry, chestnut, gentian.

Photograph by D. Crozat, 2015

<sup>1</sup> DI MEIO, 1991.

that then guide both the standard-setting action (political and regulatory body) and the practical action on the territory.

Although simplistic, the concept of territorial ideology helps to identify key issues for internal discussion, to coin the phrase ‘we here’, to come up with a collective representation based on a system of shared values. But this ideology is also an approach that can equally be used in order to promote the territory outside. This is the source of what some consider with more<sup>2</sup> or less<sup>3</sup> caution as territorial marketing. For Lussault<sup>4</sup>, territorial ideology works on three levels:

- The legendary: this is about storytelling, telling a story that makes up the ‘golden legend’ of the shared territory. For France, it is as much that of Joan of Arc or Vercingetorix as the account of the football World Cup victory. For Portugal is Don Dinis or Sebastian King. At town or village level, it can be found in local heroes (starting with street names, a basic form of heritage status granting) or in real events which have been rewritten and became legends. Those events can be of all kinds, happy or unhappy, as long as a collective *momentum* was felt at the time, lending it a sense of togetherness. Local festivals and anniversaries are designed to promote remembrance of such events, but also to outline choices in terms of heritage status granting: in Béziers, South France, the reinvention of the ‘Caritats’ feast since 2005 makes it clear that the emphasis is being placed on the town’s medieval period

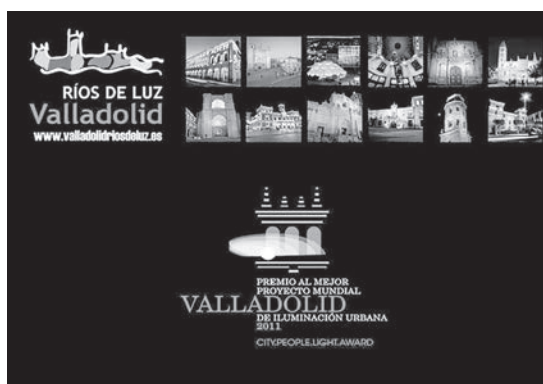


Fig. 2. In Valladolid, the project of enhancing heritage through light (Ríos de Luz) assumes a double selection: in the history of the city (the Golden legend wants to forget its industrial age) and in city space (for the geographicity, the chosen route represents only 20 to 30% of the city center).

<sup>2</sup> DEAKIN *et al.*, 1993.

<sup>3</sup> ROSEMBERG, 2000.

<sup>4</sup> LUSSAULT, 2005.

rather than on the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century or, on more ancient times, roman antiquity (the two other historical climax of the city).

- The geographicity: this is a reference to the morphological organisation of the site, but at the same time to the rhetoric generated about it. In France again, we will thus find *Le Tour de Gaule* (*Asterix and the Banquet* in French) just as much as the Tour de France cycling race (or Italian, Portuguese, Colombian, Spanish, ...), with its representation as a hexagonal shape or its frequent comments stating that «it is unnecessary to go on holidays abroad since France (or Italy, Portugal, China, Spain, Germany,...) is blessed with pretty much every type of landscapes». Morphological organisation and rhetoric are hard to dissociate since rhetoric has an effect: it performs<sup>5</sup> and therefore leaves its mark on the organisation of the area. The representation of France as a hexagon goes hand in hand with some conceptions that have driven land-use planning policies in the 1960s. Other example during the first part of 19<sup>th</sup> century, the desire to make French territory more homogeneous by drawing up (in the 1820s) the Saint-Malo-Geneva statistical line showing a rich north and east in front of a poor south and west coincides with the launch of the first national development policy<sup>6</sup>.
- The political scene: this is about the staging of a political figure. The aim is to *embody* the territory, to speak the language of the city or the country in question. Institutionalised or not, the politician is first and foremost a *spokesman* (Members of Parliament are called *representatives*), i.e. he or she puts people in contact with a town which has almost become a character: De Gaulle embodies 1960s' France, Churchill 1940s' England, but beyond politicians, there are other *elected* figures (that is to say chosen) who play the same role: for example, Pablo Neruda in Valparaiso, Ayrton Senna first in São Paulo and then the world, Madreus in Lisbon and after all the Portugal. Of course, this identification is often anchored in the past and continually refers back to the golden legend (likewise for many of the street names). Finally, the reference to Dalí in Perpignan is aimed at the local population (Dali declared its train station centre of the world) whereas is aimed at the outside world; Churchill or De Gaulle succeeded because they managed, each in their own way, to embody these two dimensions.

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<sup>5</sup> In performativity, rhetoric has a deep impact on reality – it replaces the action by reconfiguring the object in question.

<sup>6</sup> CHARTIER, 1997 [1984].

In this context, the reason why it is often difficult to *give substance* to recent territorial constructions becomes clearer: global space (despite Unesco), the European Union, new groupings of communes, countries etc. come across as artificial because they have not had sufficient time to develop a territorial ideology.

Heritage is called upon in each area of territorial ideology, especially the first two. As a collective discourse, territorial ideology is the main territory building tool. But whilst it is a necessary prerequisite to territorial action in the sense that it allows the building of a unifying identity (the development of a collective project whose relevance is justified by it being anchored in a shared and ancient history), it remains a catalyst for initiatives. It should in no way be a substitute for the action itself, otherwise it might adversely affect the objects involved in this development process<sup>7</sup>.

## A PRACTICAL GOVERNANCE TOOL

Indeed, and this is the second dimension, this structuring process is also a planning process which requires the setting-up of cooperation initiatives and helps acquiring skills that prove to be effective in other areas. At all territorial levels, the case studies presented in this chapter show that heritage projects are complex because of the involvement of varied skills, their high cost and a relatively low direct return on investment. Therefore, this often implies multiple funding. This also generates synergies which then prove very useful because of the quality of the networks they create in projects that fall outside the scope of heritage. Furthermore, heritage

projects introduce collaborative practices between historically highly compartmentalised departments and sectors which may improve the efficiency of ‘territorialised’ social systems and, *in fine*, add value to productions which seemed initially unrelated to the heritage status granting process (Fig. 3).

In the context of territories marked by increasing mobility and radical changes in spatial, productive, political or demographic systems for the last



Fig. 3. Cathar Milk: the invention of a Cathar heritage in Aude refers to a fundamentalist Christian sect of the thirteenth century. It has generated a collective momentum whose influence goes well beyond regional boundaries and which brings significant economic benefits through a registered trademark called “Cathar country”.

<sup>7</sup> Yet, we shall see below that it is precisely what is happening with the creation of hyper-real heritage.



30 years, the massive use of heritage becomes easier to understand. This heritage ‘proliferation’ aims to give unity and to ensure the promotion of territories which are in a process of almost constant redefinition. Indeed, many spaces find themselves poorly positioned if viewed from a marketing perspective, and in search of an identity if the emphasis is placed on their territorial dimension.

This goes as far as ‘folklorization’, i.e. complete reconstructions (doc. 4), creations which are then called ‘hyper-real’<sup>8</sup> in order to provide legitimacy to cities or recently developed sites, for example shopping centres (Fig. 5).



Fig. 4. (Source: LO RUSSO, 2009): Concern for historical truth is secondary to the reinvention of a memory which is sometimes very approximate, and that does not seem to pose any problem: the Ecomuseum village founded by Karisko in the north of Martinique claims some kinship with the Indian ‘ancestors’ of the association’s members and the desire to make their lives part of the island’s heritage, even though the last Indian natives disappeared almost 500 years ago... In fact, this is above all a tourism development project aimed at a Caribbean clientele.



Fig. 5. In Porto, in one of the historical landmarks of the country (the headquarters of the leading Republican newspaper at the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century), the Santa Catarina shopping centre offers recreations of ‘traditional’ house fronts from the north of Portugal. The comments of the architect behind the project are clear: «Why go and look for original houses, located far away and sometimes difficult to access or in poor condition when we can offer you copies in excellent condition, better proportioned [generally reduced by a third] and pleasant to look at?» Five of them were even made up from “regional features”. The end of heritage and the beginning of hyper-reality?

<sup>8</sup> CROZAT, 2007.





Fig. 6. Social concerns are not always the first priorities when it comes to granting heritage status: even an ecomuseum deemed to care about those issues seems to accept without hesitation (and without comment) the concept of the 'father figure' associated with management at the time and the portrayal of child labour (a sensitive issue in our society). «J.B. Baudot and his employees» – Ciry-le-Noble (71) brickyard  
Source: Ciry-le-Noble ecomuseum brochure (under the authority of Le Creusot ecomuseum)

The granting of heritage status is then deemed, sometimes excessively (Fig. 6), to increase the efficiency of territorial development.

The concept of hyper-reality<sup>9</sup> attempts to describe the propensity of our societies to build *true* images of spaces that do not exist; it is part of what some<sup>10</sup> call the 'disneylandization' of the world. Indeed, the word hyper-realisation refers to a performative metaphorization process which, using media-covered representations, rearranges socio-spatial systems, without taking into account the original production conditions of these representations as they become irrelevant. This hyper-realized world replaces the original reality because it is more satisfying, is designed to be 'mediatized' and is subject to ongoing marketing campaigns: the citizen, the player or the amateur develops a longing for these products, he/she becomes a client/consumer and prefers them to the originals whose enjoyment requires greater efforts. This simultaneous redefinition of the consumer and the product being sold to him/her is very relevant to leisure activities and culture, in particular heritage, because it gives credence to golden legends which are sometimes dubious from a historical point of view (Figs. 4 to 6).

<sup>9</sup> BAUDRILLARD, 1981.

<sup>10</sup> BRUNEL, 2006.

## GRANTING HERITAGE STATUS TO A HYPER-REAL CITY IN ORDER TO LEND IT MEANING: MONTPELLIER

Among the large cities along the Mediterranean coast of France, Montpellier is the only one to have been founded after Antiquity (at the end of the 10<sup>th</sup> century). This creates an inferiority complex among local elected representatives who wish to consolidate the success of the city's recent development while trying to strengthen an urban character which, at times, has been undermined by the huge influx of new inhabitants over the last forty years. Since the 1980s, about 60 streets and places (Fig. 7 and Table 1) have been given names referring to Antiquity and its culture<sup>11</sup>; in addition, about 15 new major buildings have been built, some of them along neoclassical architectural lines (in particular, those of Ricardo Bofill and their many citations) and with copies of famous statues of Greek gods or philosophers called upon to carry the image of the city. These references are mainly concentrated in the Antigone<sup>12</sup> district (less than 1 km long by 250 metres wide) where they

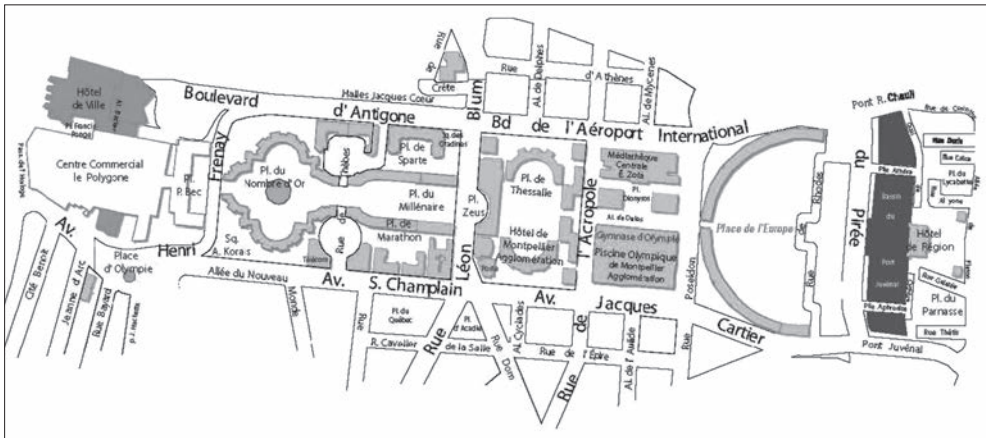


Fig. 7. A brand new 'classical' district.

Designed (S. Coursière, UMR ART-Dev) from an official map of the city of Montpellier (<http://www.montpellier.fr/2447-plan-montpellier.htm>; accessed on the 4th of December 2010)

<sup>11</sup> These names, which are as worthy as many others conjuring up images of the countryside in our peri-urban housing developments, the maritime *tradition* of our tourist resorts created by the Racine project (la Grande Motte!) or an equally uncertain Occitania (for example the announcement, in the Toulouse metro, of the station names in bad Occitan language), all too often refer to the Hellenistic culture of classical opera and operetta of the French second Empire.

<sup>12</sup> Originally, this name simply referred to its urban opposition to the 'Polygone', a large shopping centre built in the 1970s which cuts the spatial link between this new centre and the old one.

**Table 1.** Montpellier, the ‘ancient’ City; building a local culture by reference to Antiquity.

**Squares:** Golden Ratio, Thessaly, Troy, Parnassus, Marathon, Sparta, Byblos, Acadia, Dionysus, Olympia, Uranus, Agora

**Lanes:** Delos, Attica, Aulis, Delphi, Cyclades, Euboea, Zeus, Phyllis Gardens, Pomona Gardens, Ulysses, Mycenae

**Streets:** Acropolis, Poseidon, Naiads, Athens, Thebes, Corinth, Halcyon, Calypso, Aristaeus, Circe, Penelope, Epidaurus, Epirus, Asclepius, Eurydice, Galatea, Hippolyte, Horatii, Sabines, Vestals, Thetis, Young Parque, Latium, March, Orpheus, Tipasa, Tyre

**Cul-de-sac:** Archimedes, Bacchae, Chaldea, Numidians, Vesuvius

Helios Close, Marianne **Harbour**, Nereid **Junction**, Piraeus **Avenue**, Cythera **Quays**, Palladium **Quays**

**Footbridges:** Aphrodite and Athena

**The Olympia** gymnasium, **the Antigone** swimming pool (mundanely Olympic-sized, but whose Venus and Aphrodite basins are decorated with a classical statue replica), the Neptune and Amphitrite swimming pools in the peripheral municipalities (built and operated by the conurbation authorities led by the same team as the municipality of Montpellier)...

*This review is not exhaustive and does not take into account other classical references which have been used for some time (Juvenal, Babylon, Via Domitia, Lyre, Roman Road), offices buildings, restaurants, nor, of course, the toponyms related to plants with a Greek-sounding name.*

make up nearly all of the street network, up to the Odysseum (A postmodern shopping centre) in the eastern part of the city where the council seeks to build a new ‘centrality’ which would extend the old medieval centre (Écusson) and its 19<sup>th</sup> century developments.

In addition, this naming process has gradually reached other parts of the city: to the West, the district of Celleneuve’s new public park is called Dioscorides, and is located near the Circe gardens; one can even find a car park called “parking des Sabines”, not to mention the conurbation’s network of waste disposal sites named Demeter (!). It is particularly interesting to note that other players feel the need to get involved: about 30 housing and office developments (Hermes, Calypso, the Banks of Helios, the Gardens of Akantha, the Gates of Agora, Minos, Forum...), and even a property developer called Helenis. There are also a number of restaurants (Julius Cesar, Garum, Apicius, Oxygarum, Acropolis, the little Aphrodite, the Cyclades) as well as other businesses that carry the same references, both in Montpellier but now also in the nearby conurbations: from 2000 to 2004, Murviel-lès-Montpellier hosted four edition of a classical heritage exhibition entitled Forum Year, with performances from a cast of gladiators from Nîmes called *Acta expérimentation*.

## THEMESCAPE, HERITAGE-SCAPE AND MEDIA CULTURE

This process is described by English-speaking authors<sup>13</sup> as the creation of *themescares*<sup>14</sup>; more recently, the trend for *scape*-ending words in human sciences<sup>15</sup> has led to the proposal of a concept named *heritage-scape*<sup>16</sup>: while this approach has the advantage of finally introducing the idea of a process in a field which has long remained very conservative and attached to the idea of approaching heritage as a corpus<sup>17</sup>, it does not seem to me as rich as the one introduced by the concept of *themescape*.

This is because the *themescape* concept covers the spectacularization of a territory which has been restructured around an invented or rebuilt heritage, simplified to the extreme in order to be easily understood by the largest possible number of people (local population as well as visitors). Its aim is to replace any other picture that these naturally complex territories could give.

It also addresses the issue of the inherent limitations of an excessively eurocentric approach of time (i.e. the linear time of modernity) which turns these concepts of heritage and sustainable development into ideologies, those concepts being difficult to apply to other parts of the world and easy to expose as tools of neo-colonial imperialism: Afghan or Iraqi Islamists have clearly understood this when they blow up UNESCO listed sites and highlight the naivety as well as the rapid obsolescence of the *heritage-scape* approach favoured by Di Giovine who spoke<sup>18</sup> of tourism on world heritage sites as being a “vehicle for peace”.

Instead, the use of *themescape* helps to explain why such attacks against heritage remain scarce<sup>19</sup> since it works on the implicit idea that, in the West like elsewhere, its users divert the logics of heritage from their original purpose; their neo-colonial

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<sup>13</sup> RODAWAY, 1994.

<sup>14</sup> The French word-for-word translation would be “landscape with a theme”; in fact, considering the variety of notions included in this expression by the authors, it could be translated as “theme-based spatial system”. As this interesting concept has not given rise to any development by French authors, we have kept the English word.

<sup>15</sup> Freed from their sociological (until the 1980s) then cultural obsession (1990-2000), human sciences, and in particular heritage studies, have just discovered that space had a meaning. This latest trend explains the proliferation of landscapes (*waterscape*, for example), without this concept being always well understood: having ignored for a long time the abundant geographic literature on the issue, one reinvents the world (FOURNIER *et al.*, 2014)...

<sup>16</sup> DI GIOVINE, 2009.

<sup>17</sup> GILLOT *et al.*, 2013.

<sup>18</sup> DI GIOVINE, 2010.

<sup>19</sup> Even during its most hard-line phases, the Iranian Republic has never been as radical despite the procrastination and ambiguities of its management of pre-Islamic and Islamic heritage sites (ATYABI, 2014).

ideological charge is defused by the economic and/or territorial manipulation of heritage.

This heritage process helps to insert these spaces into a media culture<sup>20</sup>. For these two authors, every object is reworked today in order to become cultural and, more importantly, to integrate its remediations and its promotion into its design. This process of setting the world into images under the injunction of a ubiquitous communication paradigm leads these media cultures to replace any genuine culture.

Thus, a local culture is gradually coming through this ‘classical’ *themescape* of Montpellier: in its answer to a reader’s letter in February 2005, the local weekly newspaper (*La Gazette*) did not hesitate to give a Greek mythology lecture on Leda which started with “in order to clear up a common misunderstanding”, as if such conversations happened on a daily basis... A mini survey carried out in an amphitheatre amongst first year degree students, mostly from Montpellier, revealed that nearly 4/5<sup>th</sup> of them thought that Montpellier had been founded by the Romans or the Greeks; this sparked a debate, but only to decide between the two origins...

This spreading process also clearly shows how the rhetoric of the urban project passes from the public entity to the population who reworks and reinterprets the images in other spatial contexts to make Montpellier a hyper-real ancient city in the making, so much so that these themes continue to be used as part of the Odysseum project more to the East.

In Béziers, the recreation of the Caritats (a medieval festival which has been standardised according to the theme codes<sup>21</sup>) is totally consistent with this approach of *themescape* creation. The process can also be applied to other periods, such as with the recent hyper-real reconstruction of the Canal du Midi’s nine locks in a shopping centre (Fig. 8).

Looking more broadly, in the Aude County now become “Cathar Country”, there is a widespread drive to rework the past and the local heritage in order to give it, as in the CityWalk District of Los Angeles, “a temporal gloss to reduce the sense of artificiality”<sup>22</sup>. This rebuilding of the Hollywood district is a hyper-real disneylandization<sup>23</sup> which goes so far as to suggest «coating the brand new street with an instant historical varnish with the clever use of decoration: on the opening day, the public will discover buildings painted in such a way as to suggest prior

<sup>20</sup> MAIGRET *et al.*, 2005.

<sup>21</sup> Guiu (GUIU, 2009) even talks about a ‘festive kit’ when faced with the incredible uniformity of the medieval festivals that have been springing up across Western Europe since the 1990s. This uniformity is due to the presence of the same entertainment companies in all medieval festivals.

<sup>22</sup> DAVIS, 2006: 87.

<sup>23</sup> BRUNEL, 2006.





**Fig. 8.** Hesitating between gadget and urban project? The hyper-real reconstruction of the Fonsérannes locks in the Polygone shopping centre in Béziers. Although the Canal du Midi has been listed as a World Heritage Site by UNESCO since 2004, the site of the nine locks at Fonsérannes has not been particularly well developed until 2017. However, great care has been taken with its reproduction (reduced to three locks). Another copy of this piece of heritage adorns a roundabout at one of the city entrances, a common practice in contemporary heritage status granting.

Source: Polygone shopping centre, Béziers, 2010

occupancy. Terrace floors will feature lollipop wrapping papers, as if discarded by previous visitors»<sup>24</sup>.

In addition, these strategies do not work every time: no sooner was the former Mayor of Montpellier elected president of the Languedoc-Roussillon region that he wanted to give it a new name: Septimania, borrowed from Late Antiquity and high middle Age. It failed because the Occitan regionalists attached to the 'Languedoc' name<sup>25</sup> found support in the political opposition to the new president, worried about this activism: an already established late medieval hyper-reality drives another high medieval one out...

<sup>24</sup> BRUNEL, 2006.

<sup>25</sup> Which originated in the province of Languedoc from the 13th to the 18th century.



## CONCLUSION: THE NEW TERMS OF HERITAGE STATUS GRANTING, BETWEEN COMMERCIAL GADGET AND TERRITORIAL PROJECT

In the end, this underlines the value of a cultural approach for territorial consistency building. The economic project forms part of the territorial project and is not, as is often the case, the only engine. The latter brings stereotypical patterns with rapidly decreasing productivity because of their high competitiveness, without taking local characteristics into account. Yet this artificiality does not prevent its use as a support for territorial ideologies. Although diluted, these heritage claims remain key to the building of local identities. Those hyper-real heritages convey aesthetic, social and moral values little concerned with historical accuracy, which are those promoted by the triumphant free market ideology of the early part of this century. The spectacularization of these values through this rebuilt or invented heritage helps to understand the relationship between a global scale, often confined to a regional area (Europe, Mediterranean, Caribbean...), and a local scale whose unique identity is loudly claimed; but this uniqueness ultimately proves illusory, like these heritages that are supposed to support them and those fragile and elusive identities that they outline.

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