



Bachelor's courses Faculty of Humanities

VU University Amsterdam - Student- & Onderwijszaken - Exchange programme Vrije Universiteit - 2019-2020

World Heritage and Conflict

Course code	L_AABAGES207 ()
Period	Period 5
Credits	6.0
Language of tuition	English
Faculty	Faculty of Humanities
Coordinator	dr. L.R. Egberts
Examinator	dr. L.R. Egberts
Teaching staff	prof. dr. G.L.M. Burgers, prof. dr. S. Legene, dr. L.R. Egberts
Teaching method(s)	Seminar, Lecture
Level	200

Course objective

- In this introductory course students acquire knowledge and understanding of the theoretical foundations of the field of heritage studies and are introduced to the main (inter)national political and public debates surrounding heritage practice, with a special focus on UNESCO and the pros and cons of securing a World Heritage-status.
- Students acquire basic knowledge of site-specific inter(national) heritage policy.
- Through the analysis of a selection of Heritage Sites, students gain insight in processes of site-specific research, canonisation, musealisation, and possible sources for conflict concerning world heritage status.
- On the basis of their newly acquired knowledge, students are able to compare and reflect critically upon individual case studies in their final paper.
- Students develop skills in both textual and visual analysis and presentation techniques.

Course content

In this course students are made familiar with the (inter)national political framework that shapes our contemporary interaction with and debates on cultural heritage. The meaning of the concept of heritage has radically changed throughout the years, it has grown from 'monument' to the slightly larger concept of 'site', to 'setting', areas and cities and finally to landscape. But today, heritage can also refer to immaterial culture: practices, stories, theatre, etcetera. In this course however, we will talk about a very specific category of heritage: UNESCO World Heritage. What makes the concept of World Heritage exceptional is its universal application? UNESCO claims that World Heritage sites belong to all the peoples of the world, irrespective of the territory on which they are located. During this course we will focus on the way in which UNESCO seeks to encourage the identification, protection and preservation of cultural and natural heritage around the world considered to be of outstanding value to humanity. By discussing critically recent academic, political and public debates on individual World Heritage Sites that somehow have become sites of conflict, you will reflect upon what is called the 'heritage paradox' - the constant tension between processes of signification, appropriation and sharing, the management of future changes and the urge to protect the relics of the past. Three aspects of world heritage will be central in this course:

- Outstanding Universal Value(OUV) and the supranational character of world heritage
- Experience and enjoyment of world heritage: tourism
- World heritage under threat: conflict

Form of tuition

Lectures and guest lectures, seminars, excursions.

Type of assessment

Participation & weekly assignments (10%);
poster presentation & discussion (20%); final paper (70%).

Course reading

Marie-Theres Albert and Birgitta Ringbeck, 40 Years World Heritage Convention. Popularizing the Protection of Cultural and Natural Heritage De Gruyter 2015 (DOI (Book):

<https://doi-org.vu-nl.idm.oclc.org/10.1515/9783110424409>)

Other course literature to be announced.

Entry requirements

This is the second course in the History programme's 'History, Heritage and memory' - specialization, open for MKDA and History students. For international exchange students (level 200-300) from other disciplines a basic knowledge of (art) history is required.

Target group

BA2 History students, BA2 and BA3 MKDA students, International humanities students, level 200-300.

Remarks

This course is obligatory in the second year, for students with a 'Heritage Studies: histories, memories, spaces' - specialization. This course is a prerequisite for the third year courses in the Heritage track. The course also welcomes MKDA-students and students interested in archaeology and landscape. For international exchange students at BA2 or BA3 level a basic knowledge of (art) history is required.