

Dutch Cultural Heritage: Art and History

21 July – 1 August.

Contact moments

On non-excursion days we meet at 9-10h30 for a lecture on the theme of the day. We hold a seminar in the afternoon 13h30-15h.

Lecturer

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Abstract

This course studies the cultural heritage of the Low Countries from a critical perspective. Monumental buildings, museum collections and cultural landscapes in the Netherlands and Belgium give us a selective historical understanding of both countries. Heritage is what a social context wants to preserve in the present for enacting certain futures; also in the Netherlands and Belgium certain pasts have been preserved, and others have been deliberately forgotten. In this course, we study the mechanics and politics of heritage-making by zooming in on the Low Countries. We learn about both countries' carefully constructed historical landscapes and explore the politics and tensions behind them. Students learn and engage with a series of heritage and art collections and learn about Dutch and Belgian culture and politics and how heritage played a role in making society and citizens. Since many collections and monuments have been made in the 19th and 20th centuries students learn about the cultural history of that period as well. The course importantly also zooms in on more contemporary debates about heritage preservation: we look at the contested memory of fascism, slavery and colonialism. In the course, three excursions are planned across the Low Countries.

Structure of the course

- *Monday 21-07: Introduction*

Morning: lecture, concepts in heritage studies

Afternoon: seminar, discussion coursework literature discussion

- *Tuesday 22-07: the history of heritage*

Morning: lecture, the birth of heritage in the Low Countries

Afternoon: seminar, heritage in the 19th century (book the European experience)

- *Wednesday 23-07: the birth of the museum*

Morning: lecture, the birth of museums in the Low Countries

Afternoon: seminar, the birth of the museum by Tonny Bennett

- *Thursday 24-07: analysing exhibits*

Morning: methods in museum analysis and discourse analysis

Afternoon: students in groups visit exhibit or heritage site and deconstruct discourse

- *Friday 25-07: Excursion Amsterdam (City tour, Rijksmuseum and Anne Frank)*

- *Monday 28-07: group presentations + difficult heritage*

Morning: group presentations

Afternoon: seminar, discussion book Sharon Macdonald

- *Tuesday 29-07: excursion + colonial heritage*

Morning: Lecture Colonial history Netherlands and decolonization of heritage

Afternoon: Seminar, Restitution

- *Wednesday 30-07: World Heritage and workshop colonial history writing*

Morning: politics of world heritage

Afternoon: Seminar University Heritage Utrecht (discussion literature + visit Utrecht University depot)

- *Thursday 31-07: Exam + excursion*

Morning: exam

Afternoon: Visit kamp amersfoort

- *Friday 01-08: Goodbye*

Morning: feedback exam (optional)

Afternoon: goodbye with drinks at Castellum hoge woerd

Literature

- Sharon MacDonald - Difficult heritage
- Harrison et al - Critical Heritage Studies and the Futures of Europe
- Lynn Meskell - Transacting UNESCO World Heritage: gifts and exchanges on a global stage

Coursework

- Midterm group presentation exhibition (15 minutes presentation + 10 min Q&A)
- Final exam about the key concepts and examples discussed in class

Requirements

- Knowledge and ability to produce written coursework in academic English (Level C)
- Ability to speak, discuss and converse in advanced English (Level C)
- Basic cycling skills

Disclaimer

Depending on factors such as the size of the group and availability of some offers, individual parts of the excursions might change. Please check the Summer School website.