

**Approaches of Cultural Pluralism: Artistic
transfer and transnational heritage. Year's subject "Dissonant Heritage and European citizenship"**

Teacher: **Alexandre Kostka** and invited docents

24 hours – 3 ECTS

Place and time: MISHA Building, room "Table ronde", weekly, Tuesday, 14-16h, from February 13 to April 23, plus interactive day excursions to sites of "Dissonant Heritage" in the Upper Rhine region (dates to be discussed with participants).

Since its introduction in 1996, the term "Dissonant heritage" has had a growing fortune in the field of heritage protection and interpretation, and has become acknowledged by the Council of Europe's Faro Convention (2005), and by the European Union which in 2016 launched the "Urban agenda" integrating an "Action Group" specifically dedicated to this

topic(<https://www.bbsr.bund.de/BBSR/EN/research/programs/ExWoSt/FieldsOfResearch/dissonant-heritage/01-start.html>)

During a time-span which encompasses a whole generation, more than 25 years, the use of the term and its significance has necessarily evolved. For its "inventors", the cultural geographers Tunbridge and Ashworth, working on the mental topography of the erased Jewish ghetto in Groningen (a little town in Norther Holland many Euroculture students are familiar with...), it meant foremost a "difficult" heritage, which many prefer to forget, but which through the work of memory specialists can be given a new life – and also exploited for tourism.

In the light of "Critical heritage studies" (Laurajane Smith, 2006), the focus shifted from the object (a place of painful memory) to the discourse that unveils "dissonance" in the public space. Seemingly "evident" places of heritage are in fact the result of power-struggles that refuse to admit their true nature, and sanctify places of the rich and powerful, while minorities are excluded. Recent theoreticians, such as V. Kisić (2016), go as far as to propose a supplementary shift, and speak of "Heritage dissonance", in order to underline that almost every place of heritage can appear as dissonant, a perspective which allows to question "sedimented narratives" and positions heritage in a larger societal, political and cultural context. Tuuli Lähdesmäki and her colleagues have shown how the various forms of discourse of the European institutions assimilate already existing narratives and transform them for their own purposes, frequently using them, according to Bo Strath, as a kind of societal glue to maintain coherence for the unification process after the failure of the European constitution in 2005. The main characteristic of the different forms of narratives surrounding this process is to generate a feeling of "belonging", particularly evident in the flagship project "European heritage label" (initiated 2007).

In the perspective of the Euroculture master, whose main characteristic is to bring together various disciplines in order to reflect on issues of the European society in its largest definition, it appears interesting to use this approach to question old and, particularly, **new** "heritage objects", such as environmental issues, gender biases, generational dissonances, suppressed or emerging memories of minorities, etc...

An extensive reader, which will be used as a reservoir for texts to be presented and discussed in class, is available here: <https://www.euroculturemaster.eu/ip-reader-2024> (password euroculturestudent23)

Basic bibliography:

Lähdesmäki, Tuuli, Luisa Passerini, Sigrid Kaasik-Krogerus, and Iris van Huis. *Dissonant Heritages and Memories in Contemporary Europe*. Cham, Switzerland: Palgrave Macmillan, 2019. (Available on internet)

Kisić, Višnja. *Governing Heritage Dissonance: Promises and Realities of Selected Cultural Policies*. European Cultural Foundation, 2016. (Available on internet)

Smith, Laurajane. *Uses of Heritage*. London: Routledge, Taylor & Francis Group, 2006.

Tunbridge, J.E, and G.J Ashworth. *Dissonant Heritage: The Management of the Past As a Resource in Conflict*. Chichester: Wiley, 1996. (Put at the disposal of participants as a pdf).