. – Museology

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***COURSE AIMS AND INTENDED LEARNING OUTCOMES***

The course provides students with the basic notions of museum history and, more specifically, of art museums as public places for collecting works of art: from their very first appearance in the ancient and Renaissance worlds through to the modern and contemporary ages. The course includes a single-subject section.

At the end of the course, students will be able to describe the main stages of development of collectionism and museums. For the single subject, students will be able to discuss a work of art or a place which is significant in relation to the subject.

***COURSE CONTENT***

*General section*

The history of the museum as a concept, looking at key issues, from its origins to the present day: places for storing works of art in the ancient world: the *Mouseion* in Alexandria; collecting in the Roman world; Medieval treasures; collecting and the appeal of relics from the ancient world in the 15th century; the Renaissance *studioli* (studies in private homes and palaces); Francesco I de Medici as collector; the “cabinets of curiosities”; scientific museums, libraries and picture galleries in the 17th century; the 18th-century Gran Tour and the birth of the modern museum; the Uffizi and Pio-Clementino Museum; the museums of Paris during the revolution; the museums of Munich and Berlin in the early 19th century; collecting in England and museums of the applied-arts; the world expos and house museums; collecting and the American museums of the late 19th and early 20th centuries; early 20th-century monumental museums; the Italian period of renewal in the 1950s; the functional and aesthetic turning point of the Guggenheim in New York; the Pompidou Centre in Paris exemplifying the new spaces and new enterprises of modern museums in the age of exhibitions.

*Single-subject section*

Museums in literature, that is to say how writers interpret the museum space as the setting for their work. Literature often refers to museums and, of course, artistic cities and places. In particular, with regard to museums, the narration of the visit of the rooms or the observation of a specific painting frequently acquires a symbolic and fantastic meaning, which is not necessarily related to the historical-artistic interpretation of that specific work or collection; often, it even goes beyond it, for a different kind of interpretation. The interest towards these observations – that may seem somehow unusual, if compared to the traditional history of art – offers new ways to present, explain, and contextualise works that are usually part of the exhibition set-up and supported by more traditional forms of explanation. Therefore, besides the suggestion offered by reading, the link between literary text and museum can also introduce significant and original perspectives from the point of view of interpretation. The single-subject section of the course will analyse various texts referring to the context of a museum in different ways.

***READING LIST***

For the general section

Students are advised to read at least two of the following texts: L.Binni – G.Pinna, *Museo. Storia e funzioni di una macchina culturale dal Cinquecento a oggi,*Milan, Garzanti, 1980 (1st ed.); A.Mottola Molfino, *Il libro dei musei*, Turin, Allemandi, 1991 (and later editions); R.Schaer, *L’invention des musées*, Paris, Gallimard, 1993 (Italian ed.: Il museo. Tempio della memoria, Universale Electa-Gallimard, Milan 1996); L.Becherucci, *Lezioni di museologia (1969-1980),* edited by A.Boralevi and M.Pedone, Florence, 1995; M.T. Fiorio, *Il museo nella storia: dallo studiolo alla raccolta pubblica,* Milan, Bruno Mondadori, 2011. The following chronological overview is also useful V. Vercelloni, *Cronologia del muse*, Milan, Jaca Book, 2007 and the textbook by F. Bottari and F. Pizzicannella, *L’Italia dei tesori.Legislazione dei beni culturali, museologia, catalogazione e tutela del patrimonio artistico*, Bologna, Zanichelli, 2002.

For the single-subject section

*Pezzi da museo. Ventidue collezioni straordinarie nel racconto di grandi scrittori*, (original title: *Treasure Palaces. Great Writers visit Great Museums*) edited by M.Fergusson, Palermo 2019 (original ed. 2016); O.Pamuk, *Il museo dell’innocenza*, Turin, 2009 (original ed. 2008). The literary texts containing references to museums will be specified during the course.

***TEACHING METHOD***

Lectures with slides. The PowerPoint presentations used in lectures will be made available to students at the end of the course.

***ASSESSMENT METHOD AND CRITERIA***

Oral exam. Students will mostly be examined on the single-subject section of the course: the equivalent proportion will be approx. two questions on the general part and two questions on the single-subject section. Students will be asked to complete a single-subject project, this should be arranged with the tutor. The final mark consists of 80% for answers to questions in the oral test and 20% for the presentation of the single-subject project.

***NOTES AND PREREQUISITES***

Students must have basic knowledge – high school textbook level – of medieval and modern history or art; they must also demonstrate their knowledge of at least one important museum in Italy they have recently visited.

Further information can be found on the lecturer’s webpage at http://docenti.unicatt.it/web/searchByName.do?language=ENG or on the faculty notice board.