# Law and the Arts

## Prof. Arianna Visconti

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

The course aims at providing students with basic competences on both international and national public and criminal law protection of cultural heritage, as well as with all relevant and most up-to-date criminological knowledge about the empirical dimension of offences against cultural property. To this effect, the course also aims at providing students with basic competences on international, EU, and comparative cultural property law, including the most relevant non-penal issues.

At the end of the course, students

- will possess the basic technical terminology and legal knowledge to understand and discuss common questions related to cultural heritage protection (both in peacetime and wartime), cultural property ownership regimes, circulation of rights over cultural objects, cultural property import, export, return and restitution rules, criminal offences against cultural property, and related issues;

- will be able to identify at least the most common indicators of possible legal risks (and particularly penal risks) related to dealing in cultural property and/or collecting art and antiquities, possess basic due diligence standards, and, more broadly, recognize specific legal issues related to cultural heritage both movable and immovable;

- will be able to assess the general outline of legal questions possibly emerging in the art and antiquities market, as well as in the management of collections, museums and other cultural institutions, to make informed decisions taking into account the most relevant laws involved, and to correctly select specific areas of competence to refer to for more complex legal problems in these fields;

- will know how to communicate and discuss common legal issues pertaining to cultural property and cultural heritage law with both specialist and non-specialist interlocutors;

- will have developed the learning skills necessary for them to continue studying in a mostly autonomous way, including, when needed, to update their basic knowledge according to new developments in cultural heritage law.

***COURSE CONTENTS***

1. Definitions of “cultural heritage” and “cultural property”.

2. The criminology of offences against cultural heritage: destruction and devastation; looting, illicit export and other forms of scattering; transnational trafficking in cultural property and organized crime; dark figure and grey market; forgeries.

3. International Law and cultural property protection: humanitarian law; the UNESCO Conventions; the UNIDROIT Convention; Council of Europe policies and conventions; European Union law; UNODC’s initiatives.

4. Criminal Law and cultural property protection: basics of Italian and Comparative Criminal Law; cultural heritage in the Italian Constitution; Criminal Law provisions pertaining to cultural heritage protection.

5. Basics on author’s rights and their legal protection; IP rules and intangible cultural heritage.

***READING LIST[[1]](#footnote-1)***

Students who *attend* regularly will study on their notes, as well as on other materials the teacher will provide during the year through the Blackboard platform.

Students which do *not regularly attend* classes are strongly encouraged to get in touch with the teacher, and will in any case refer to the collection of papers and materials to be published on Blackboard, as well as to:

J. Blake, *International Cultural Heritage Law,* Oxford University Press, 2015, pp. 23-69 and 114-312.

C. Forrest, *International Law and the Protection of Cultural Heritage,* Routledge, 2011, pp. 56-131 (pp. 1-55 are also *strongly* recommended to students without, or with very limited, prior legal education).

I.A. Stamatoudi, *Cultural Property Law and Restitution*, Edward Elgar, 2011.

Students having chosen Law & the Arts in English as an optional exam within a curriculum in Italian granting them *8 ECTS* are additionally required to read A. VISCONTI, *Problemi e prospettive della tutela penale del patrimonio culturale*, Giappichelli, 2023, pp. 3-162 and 219-334.

***TEACHING METHOD***

Lectures will be held in English (basic Italian legal terminology will be also provided when indispensable). Discussions in class and tests will be run accordingly. Students who attend regularly will be invited to take part in seminars (possibly with the participation of external experts) as well as discussions on cases and papers provided during lectures and/or through the Blackboard platform.

***ASSESSMENT METHOD AND CRITERIA***

Students *who attend regularly* will be evaluated through a final written tests, scheduled on the occasion of the *first exam session* after the end of classes, with a mixed multiple choice / open-ended questions structure. The test will assess the student’s understanding of course topics, their knowledge of basic legal terminology and main legal provisions pertaining to cultural heritage and cultural property, their ability to distinguish different legal issues and assess the most correct legal references to address them. Students who attend regularly, but who happen to fail the written test, will need to sit an oral examination at a later exam session. Students who wish to improve their evaluation as resulting from the aforementioned written test will also be able to sit an oral examination, covering all course topics, at a later exam session. Further details will be published on Blackboard.

The understanding and abilities of students *who have not regularly attended* classes will be assessed through a thorough final oral examination. Students who are unable to attend are strongly encouraged to get in touch with the teacher before starting their preparation, to better understand the specificities of the course topics and how to make the best use of the referred reading list.

***NOTES AND PREREQUISITES***

Students will not be evaluated on the quality of their English, but it is required that they are able to correctly understand and discuss course topics in that language, and that they acquire the correct technical terminology.

Law students, who wish to attend the course, are required to check for differences in courses’ calendars and to ascertain the starting date of Law and the Arts classes, which follow the schedule of the Faculty of Economics.

It is recommended to Law students wishing to take the Law & the Arts course to do so after having attended the basic courses of Public Law, Criminal Law and International Law: this will ease their understanding of the course’s specific topics and lighten their workload, considering the course’s stricter schedule, when compared to that of the Faculty of Law.

***OFFICE HOURS***

Students who attend the course regularly are encouraged to share any request for clarifications at the beginning or end of classes. The teacher is also available, by appointment (by writing to [arianna.visconti@unicatt.it](mailto:arianna.visconti@unicatt.it)), to receive students either in person (Room 329, Gregorianum Building) or online (Microsoft Teams).

1. I testi indicati nella bibliografia sono acquistabili presso le librerie di Ateneo; è possibile acquistarli anche presso altri rivenditori. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)