

# Preface

THE SECOND ISSUE OF THE IJEMS brings into focus arts and heritage as the key issues in the processes of cultural dynamics and negotiations in the Mediterranean, and it reflects on their role as the central concepts in the imagination and representation of the Mediterranean in both official and popular discourses. The narratives of a 'shared intangible Mediterranean heritage' as the most important European 'culture capital' (Bourdieu 1984) are used in the official EU rhetoric of integration and Europeanization processes, particularly in promoting multicultural citizenship and European transnational, cosmopolitan identity. These discourses are often uncritically employed by local and national elites in Mediterranean societies, further leading to specific auto-stereotyping and politics of reduction and cultural inferiority. Such internalization of Eurocentric discourses is a result of center-periphery dynamics, which bring new challenges to Mediterranean societies and to the Euro-Mediterranean idea in general. The present issue aims to speak about these contradictory discourses of the Mediterranean as 'the cradle' of European culture, which at the same time construct the image of Mediterranean cultures as traditional, archaic, and exotic. Together they (re)produce complex narratives, representations and imaginations of Mediterranean art and heritage, which the issue aims to theorize.

With transnational mobility, flow of capital, labor, and media, the cultural productions in the Mediterranean can be seen as transnational and global. In a generally volatile economic and political climate, the issues of cultural property, arts and heritage are becoming the main arena for negotiation of identities and imaginary boundaries between cultures. This issue addresses the role that expressive culture and 'material' cultural representations, such as memorial sites and architecture, play in performing 'Mediterraneannes.' The first article thus addresses the intersections between migration and heritage in southern Italy. Beyond offering an anthropological analysis of these processes, Albahari also provides a critical consideration of the Southern Question narrative. Pistrick and Dalipaj's case study is located in the South Albanian regions of Labëria and Toskëria, marked by the coexistence of Mus-

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lim and Orthodox Christian communities. It reflects the religious and regional diversity as expressed in the collective village feasts that are connected to religious rituals such as Bajram, the commemoration of Bektashi Saints or Orthodox Easter, Christmas and the church patrons' feasts. Kozbuska's article examines the period of the late Renaissance in Ukrainian towns, when the process of reception and adaptation of the Italian architectural model as the Mediterranean heritage, was understood as the influence of the 'real' Europe on the European 'peripheries.' The article of Lebel and Drory presents official Israeli discourses on memory, commemoration, and setting collective boundaries. It explores how memory representations in monuments and commemorations are often used as an interface between collective remembrance and historical representations, and focuses on struggles over 'the valid' interpretations of the past. The last contribution concentrates on dynamics between local-global and north-south using the example of internationalization of Higher Education from a Mediterranean perspective. All contributions are attempting to give multifaceted views on EU cultural politics referring to the Mediterranean and the ongoing global processes within (trans)national heritage policies.

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REFERENCES

Bourdieu, P. 1984. *Distinction: A social critique of the judgment of taste*. Trans. R. Nice. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

