



UNIVERSITÀ
DEGLI STUDI DI MILANO-BICOCCA

COURSE SYLLABUS

Cultures and Societies of The Pacific

2021-2-F0101R029

Course title

Pacific cultures and societies

Topics and course structure

The societies inhabiting the Pacific ocean are increasingly attracting the international attention. While climate change and sea level rise are tackling the Pacific Islands' populations vulnerability, indigenous intellectuals are playing a role in rethinking their sovereignty and peripherization by activating a pan-pacific methodological decolonization process. Through contextually different epithets ("the blue continent", "onesolwara", "one salt water", etc.) the inhabitants of Oceania are reinforcing their interconnected political position within the world theater and activating creative forms of memory restoration. _____

Objectives

The course, thanks to an active participation of students, aims at promoting the following learning objectives:

Knowledge and comprehension: students will acquire in-depth knowledge on the main authors, concepts and

debates of the anthropology of Oceania

Capacity to apply knowledge and comprehension: through the study of ethnographies and of the indigenous intellectual thought students will develop their critical thinking and context analysis on current issues which go beyond the Pacific area

Objectives of the course are also the strengthening of the autonomy of thought, of the communication skills, and critical thinking.

Methodologies

Le online lessons will follow a hybrid model: mostly carried out in a synchronous modality and partly pre-registered. After the first orientation lessons, classes will be only partially lectured-based: students will be indeed be asked to actively participate to debates and to the analysis of ethnographic cases.

The screening of audio-visuals, such as anthropological documentaries specific to the area, will be integrating the course, as well as PPTs to back teaching.

Online and offline teaching materials

All the teaching materials will be uploaded online

Programme and references for attending students

Students will be asked to read the following texts and articles:

1. Hau'ofa E., 1993, "Our sea of islands", *A new Oceania: Rediscovering our sea of islands*, in *We Are the Ocean*, Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, pp. 2-16

2. _____

Articles chosen within (to be agreed by the professor):

1. Gneccchi Ruscone L., Paini A. (eds.), 2017, *Tides of Innovation in Oceania*, ANU Press

2. Jolly M., Tcherkezoff S., Tryon D. (eds.), 2009, *Oceanic Encounters*, ANU Press

Or, alternatively, a monography to be chosen among (to be agreed by the professor):

1. Besnier N., 2011, *On the edge of the global: modern anxieties in a Pacific Island Nation*, Standford University Press

2. Small C., 1997, *Voyages. From Tongan Villages to American suburbs*, Cornell University Press

3. Gewertz D., Herrington F., 2010 *Cheap meat. Flap food nations in the Pacific Islands*, California University Press

Programme and references for non-attending students

Students will be asked to read the following texts and articles:

1. Hau'ofa E., 1993, "Our sea of islands", *A new Oceania: Rediscovering our sea of islands*, in *We Are the Ocean*, Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, pp. 2-16
2. Favole A., Giordana L., Islands of islands: responses to the center-periphery fractal model in East Futuna (Wallis and Futuna) and the Belep Islands (New Caledonia), *Island Studies journal* 13 (1): 209-222
3. Cottino G., 2014, "Obesity 'epidemic' in the Kingdom of Tonga: critical notes on the right body size", in *Le Journal des anthropologues*, 138-139: 65-87, 2014
4. Gneccchi Ruscone L., Paini A. (eds.), 2017, *Tides of Innovation in Oceania*, Anu Press (**Introduction**)
5. Jolly M., Tcherkezoff S., Tryon D. (eds.), 2009, *Oceanic Encounters*, Anu Press ...

Articles chosen within (to be agreed by the professor):

1. Gneccchi Ruscone L., Paini A. (eds.), 2017, *Tides of Innovation in Oceania*, ANU Press
2. Jolly M., Tcherkezoff S., Tryon D. (eds.), 2009, *Oceanic Encounters*, ANU Press

A monography to be chosen among (to be agreed by the professor):

1. Besnier N., 2011, *On the edge of the global: modern anxieties in a Pacific Island Nation*, Stanford University Press
2. Small C., 1997, *Voyages. From Tongan Villages to American suburbs*, Cornell University Press
3. Gewertz D., Herrington F., 2010 *Cheap meat. Flap food nations in the Pacific Islands*, California University Press

Assessment methods

- Final exam: oral
- Evaluation criteria: students' knowledge of the concepts and foundational authors of the discipline, comprehension of the main conceptual issues, the familiarity with theoretical debates and the capacity to actively employ acquired knowledge will be evaluated. Furthermore, the active participation to class debates and activities will be taken into account for the final grade.

Office hours

On appointment, online

Programme validity

Programs have a two year validity

Course tutors and assistants
