UNIVERSITÀ
DEGLI STUDI DI MILANO-BICOCCA

COURSE SYLLABUS

Modern History

2223-2-F0101R066

Course title

Modernity and consumption: needs, wishes, and politics

Topics and course structure

The program consists of a thematic part and a general one.

Thematic Part: The course investigates consumption as an effective token for needs, wishes, lifestyles, networks and real economy. Particular attention will be drawn to the evolution of food consumption patterns starting from the great geographical explorations and the Colombian exchange, considering the analysis of new forms of organization of production, the establishment of the Atlantic trade, and the first forms of intensive globalization, highlighting the absolute novelties, the implications for all the continents involved and notably the long-term legacies. Through the analysis of consumption, and especially food consumption, we will investigate the deep connections between production systems, fiscal flows, institutional choices, market dynamics, widespread habits, fashions and lifestyles.

General part: a guided tour through the main events of the modern age, focusing on the social, political, economic and cultural features and institutions that originated between the XVI and the XIX century and that are deeply connected to the contemporary world.

Objectives

The general path and the thematic path interplay, pursuing shared objectives.

The teaching, in its dual path, aims at inspiring an understanding of the contemporary world in a diachronic key with regards to its socio-cultural, political, institutional, and economic factors. Together with a certain mastery of the modern world, both in its European framework as well as in its intercontinental dynamics, the following skills are expected:

- Ability to identify causal connections in the analysis of given dynamics and contexts.
- Ability to critically adopt comparative perspectives
- Aware and critical use of information sources.

Methodologies

Lectures, interaction through class debate on class materials, seminars held by specialists, slides and blog. Individual presentations and group work are foreseen.

Live, streaming classes, with recording available

Online and offline teaching materials

Selection of readings, videos and further didactic tools.

Programme and references for attending students

The course is divided into 2 parts: a general and a thematic one.

References:

Bellabarba-Lavenia, *Introduzione alla storia moderna*, Mulino, 2018

Further readings will be indicated throughout classes.

Programme and references for non-attending students

Bellabarba & Lavenia, *Introduzione alla storia moderna,* Mulino, 2018

Mintz, *Storia dello zucchero, tra politica e cultura*, Einaudi, 2020

non-attending students are kindly asked to liaise with the teacher in a timely manner. Mintz's work provides non-attending students with a number of elements and issues which have been handled throughout the course.

Assessment methods

To attending-students:

Written and oral exam

Evaluation criteria: the evaluation will consider the comprehensiveness of the students' knowledge, together with the effectiveness of their written and oral performace, both in terms of structure, and with respect to its formal features.

Office hours

From March to early June, while the course is running:

office 3087 building U6
by appointment (please write to laura.prosperi@unimib.it)

Programme validity

Programs last two academic years.

Course tutors and assistants

Sustainable Development Goals

NO POVERTY | ZERO HUNGER | RESPONSIBLE CONSUMPTION AND PRODUCTION