UNIVERSITÀ
DEGLI STUDI DI MILANO-BICOCCA

COURSE SYLLABUS

Cultures and Societies of The Middle East

2425-2-F0101R026

Course title

Middle *Easts*: mobility, petrocultures and moving environments

Topics and course structure

The trajectory of the course will face the multiplicity and complexity of the areal study of the Middle East, following the path of the researches of Ugo Fabietti that opened this field of studies in Italy in relation to international arena, departing from a deconstruction and the “invention” of the Middle East.
We will face a multiplicity of “Middle *Easts*”: the Mediterranean connections of this field of research highlighted by the fluxes of population, the heterogenous contemporary processes as modernization , the laboratory of *petrocultures*, and the intermingling between social and environmental dynamics ; in short, Middle Easts in the Anthropocene.
There will be two main axes: first, the relevance of the processes of mobility and migration from and within middle eastern areas in redefining the role of locality; secondly, the patterns of socialization of the environment, the role of climate and environmental changes and the historical entanglement between environmental and cultural dynamics.
The Palestinian case will be in focus, as a laboratory of techniques of governamentality of territory and populations, exported worldwide, side by side with patterns of resistance and search for autonomy.

Objectives

Through active participation in presence, the course will enhance the capacity to connect historical categories of middle eastern studies as “ethnicity”, “kinship”, “honour”, “aridity”, “desert” with their contemporary articulation and in relation with the environmental changes and the patterns of resources management. This will be funded on the centrality of ethnographic analysis of case studies and the understanding of main theoretical changes.

The study of the multiple “laboratories of modernity” in the Middle East, from which derive part of the cultural and social fluxes in Italy and Europe, will allow to deconstruct cultural stereotypes that reproduce in contemporary crisis -humanitarian, economic, environmental- and to acquire critical knowledge of the main dynamicity of middle eastern contexts. The entanglement between migration and environmental dynamics will allow to acquire theoretical tools in understanding their intermingling and interdependence.

Methodologies

Didactic methodology of classical lectures will be inevitably interactive and circular, focusing on the analysis of ethnographic cases, as a space of communication, of common reflexions e debate around texts and papers of the course. This will compose 44 hours.
Interactive learning will be composed of laboratory of analysis of audio-video productions, in specific Palestinian and Israeli films and documentaries on settlement occupation, borders and desires under occupation, for a total of 12 hours. Two laboratory occasions of 6 hours will be offered also online, in particular for nonattending students.

Online and offline teaching materials

Power Points will be uploaded and eventual forum of discussion and coordination on specific issues of analysis.

Programme and references

Bibliography in English
-Dale F. Eickelman, **The Middle East**: An Anthropological Approach, 1989, last edition
-Lila Abu Lughoud, **Veiled Sentiments**, Honor and Poetry in a Bedouin Society, 2016, Uni California Press.
-**Two handouts collecting ethnographic essays**, to be downloaded starting from the end of October 2024 :
1-**Palestine Anthrop-oscene**
2-**Middle Easts in mouvement**

For a bibliography in Italian see the section "Programma e bibliografia".

Assessment methods

The exam consists of an oral exam in a dialogical setting on the trajectory of the texts, of the ethnographic cases and of theoretical and cultural analysis in relation to the didactic experiences of the course (for attended students). The capacity to connect the different theoretical and areal tools and the ability to make critical connections will be valorized

Office hours

on appointment by mail

Programme validity

Programs hold two academic years

Course tutors and assistants

Maria Elena Marabotto

Sustainable Development Goals

CLIMATE ACTION