UNIVERSITÀ
DEGLI STUDI DI MILANO-BICOCCA

COURSE SYLLABUS

Entertainment and Festivals

2627-2-E1503N018-E1503N01802

Learning objectives

1. Knowledge and understanding
The course is designed to introduce students to the notion of theatricality, with a particular focus on the Greek and Roman antiquity.

2. Applyng knowledge and understanding
The course introduces students to the relationship between ancient forms of spectacle and their historical and cultural contexts, with the aim of applying these insights to different periods.

3. Making judgemenets
The course aims to develop students' critical skills through class discussions and activities.

4. Communication skills
The course seeks to familiarize students with the use of specialized terminology

5. Learning skills
The course encourages students to engage with the complexity of spectacle, particularly in its ancient forms.

Contents

Performing art, theatre, event.
History of Theatre and Festivals in the Ancient Minoan Civilization of Crete.
History of Theatre and Festivals in ancient Greece
History of Theatre and Festivals in ancient Rome
Theatre tourism in the XVIII century (Grand Tour)
Theatre tourism today

Sociology and theater

Detailed program

Course Introduction: Objectives, Program, Bibliography, and Exam Methods

MODULE I: THEORETICAL INTRODUCTION
Definition of the concepts of Spectacle, Festivity, and Territory.
Characteristics of festivity yesterday and today.
The element. the territory.
Crete: Theatre and the Palace. Athens: theater and the city. Rome: spectacles and power.

MODULE II: PERFORMANCE, FESTIVAL, AND TERRITORY IN THE ANCIENT MINOAN CIVILIZATION OF CRETE
Introduction to the geographical and historical context
The main features of Cretan civilization
Performances and dances in the palaces of Phaistos and Knossos
The spectacle of bull-leaping (taurocatapsia)

MODULE III: SPECTACLE, FESTIVITY, AND TERRITORY IN ANCIENT GREECE
Introduction to the geo-historical context.
The cult of Dionysus.
Dionysian festivals: Urban Dionysia, Rural Dionysia, Anthesteria, Lenaia.
Theatrical performances: tragedy and comedy, actors, and masks.
The audience: women in the theater and women on stage.
The architecture of the Greek theater; the testimony of Vitruvius.
Ancient Greek music (seminar by Prof. Michele Traversi Montani).
Acoustics in the Greek theater (seminar by Prof. Brunella Carrera).
From Greek Tragedy to Opera (Melodramma) (seminar by Prof. Gabriele Formenti).
The Greek theater today: Greek theater festivals in Italy; the Syracuse Classical Theater Festival.

MODULE IV: SPECTACLE, FESTIVITY, AND TERRITORY IN ANCIENT ROME
The birth of *ludi scaenici* (testimony of Titus Livius).
Comedy and tragedy in Rome, actors and masks.
Women actors: the mimes.
Ancient Roman music (seminar by Prof. Michele Traversi Montani).
The Architecture of the Roman Theatre: The Example of the Roman Theatre of Turin.
The Roman Theatre of Milan: Conservation and Enhancement.
The Architecture of the Circus and the Circus Games (Ludi Circenses).
An In-Depth Study of Nero: Nero as a Performer, the Neronia Festivals, and Nero as a Theatrical Tourist in Greece.
The Architecture of the Roman Amphitheatre: The Flavian Amphitheatre (Colosseum).The Theater of Marcellus.
Circus games.
Munera at the Colosseum (testimony of Martial).
Tourism in antiquity.

MODULE V: THEATER AND TOURISM
The relationship between spectacle and tourism.
Tourist hypothesis in major Italian theaters.
Theatrical-spectacular tourism in the Grand Tour of the 18th century.
The behavior of the Italian audience.
The female travelers of the Grand Tour.

MODULE VI: THEATER AND SOCIOLOGY
Sociology of theater.
Social theater.

Prerequisites

Solid knowledge of the Italian language.
Ability to contextualize the historical and cultural content covered in class.
Knowledge of the specialized vocabulary.
Cultural interest.

Teaching methods

The course is delivered in Italian: (One lecture/seminar will be delivered in English)

Didactic Teaching (DT): 35 hours comprising:

- frontal lectures with the use of PowerPoint presentations.
- In-depth seminars held by external experts and graduate students in the field of Performance, Festival, and Territory.
- one seminar in English."*

The lessons will be conducted in person. If necessary (Public transport strikes, academic commitments), the lessons will be delivered remotely (synchronously/asynchronously), in any case not exceeding 30% of the total.

Assessment methods

ORAL EXAM **IN ITALIAN**

FOR ATTENDING STUDENTS (see Bibliography A):
An oral examination on the topics covered in class and on the assigned exam texts and articles.
Questions will cover the different modules listed in the syllabus, starting from the images and texts studied.
There are no midterm assessments.

FOR NON-ATTENDING STUDENTS (see Bibliography B):
An oral examination on the assigned exam texts and articles. CLASS NOTES WILL NOT BE REQUIRED.

IMPORTANT: Notes taken during lectures cannot be replaced by the handout circulating online. This handout has not been authorized by the lecturer and contains numerous errors.

In the same exam session and in the same day the student must necessarily take both Musica e società and *Spettacolo, festa e territorio*

Textbooks and Reading Materials

Bibliography:
BIBLIOGRAPHY A (attending students)
BIBLIOGRAPHY B (non-attending students)
Students must study only one bibliography, either A or B; it is not possible to combine the two bibliographies.
IN BOTH CASES, THE BIBLIOGRAPHY MUST BE STUDIED IN ITS ENTIRETY.

**Bibliography A: **

1. Lecture notes (essential; taken personally by the attending student and NOT from the unauthorized handout circulating online)
2. P. Zenoni, *Spettacolo, festa e territorio*, Apogeo 2003, pp. 141-174. (in e-learning)
3. N. Spineto, *La festa*, Editori Laterza, 2015, pp. 1-38 (introduction included)
4. C. Vicentini, *Storia della recitazione teatrale. Dal mondo antico alla scena digitale*, Marsilio 2023,pp. 43-86. 5 Essays:

- Diana Perego, *Si aprano le botti, si celebri Dioniso! La festa greca delle Antesterie*, in *Compagni di Classici. Tredici studiosi per rinnovare il dialogo con la cultura classica*, a cura del Club di Cultura Classica Ezio Mancino, Torino 2018, pp. 95-116 (in e-learning)
- Diana Perego, *Il teatro greco di Siracusa nel Settecento. Fonti odeporiche e figurative*, in L*a cultura del viaggio tra Adriatico e Mediterraneo nel Settecento*, a cura di P. Guida, O. Bellissimo, G. Scianatico, Cisva, 2024, pp. 219-242. (in e-learning)
- Diana Perego, *Gli spettacoli nel teatro greco siceliota del Monte Iato*, in Sinestesie on line, supplemento della rivista «SINESTESIE», a. XIV, n. 48, 2025 (in e-learning)
- Lluís Santamarta Espuña, *Tourism&Theatre. To be or not to be?*, 2018 (in e-learning)

Bibliography B:

1. G. Guidorizzi (a cura di), *Introduzione al teatro greco*, Mondadori Università, 2003, pp. 7-69).
2. P. Zenoni, *Spettacolo, festa e territorio*, Apogeo 2003, capitolo 5. Spettacolo per il turismo, pp. 141-174. (in e-learning)
3. N. Spineto, *La festa*, Editori Laterza, 2015, pp. 1-38 (inclusa la premessa)
4. C. Vicentini, *Storia della recitazione teatrale. Dal mondo antico alla scena digitale*, Marsilio 2023,pp. 43-86. 5 Essays:

- Diana Perego, *Si aprano le botti, si celebri Dioniso! La festa greca delle Antesterie*, in *Compagni di Classici. Tredici studiosi per rinnovare il dialogo con la cultura classica*, a cura del Club di Cultura Classica Ezio Mancino, Torino 2018, pp. 95-116 (in e-learning)
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Sustainable Development Goals

GENDER EQUALITY