

Dear Professors,

This is Merve Peker. I'm sending this mail for Group 6 which includes Francesco Peccatori, Jiahe Zhang, Lucie Gajdova and me.

Before answering the questions, we would like to say that we really enjoyed attending this class and thank you for everything.

1. Did the course change your understanding of area studies or did it just confirm your already existing idea?

We all agreed that the course deepened our understanding of area studies. On one hand, it confirmed some of our inherent knowledge but on the other hand, it broadened our perspective and depth of our thinking. It also further showed the complexity of each area.

2. Which area/topic was the most interesting for you and in which way eventually would you like this topic to be expanded?

The answer to this question is subjective as you can predict. However, we were mentioning Latin America, the Middle East, and North America as particularly interesting ones.

We think that the presentations are comprehensive enough that no major changes are needed. What we appreciated the most were the historical and cultural ones.

- If we would need to say something, you may expand the diverse development of the theme more from the historical context to the contemporary forms of culture for each area. In this respect, you may give some suggestions for novels, movies and tv movies (and discussions could take place related to them).

3. The basic idea of the course was to demonstrate that area studies are able to encompass a great diversity of approaches, from IR to cultural studies. Were we successful in defending the idea? Or was it apparent that there are really distinct approaches and sources that, at the end of the day, are used in the same manner?

We think that throughout the semester, there were varieties of approaches depending on the field of study but also depending on the different speakers.

My opinion is that sometimes we are missing some parts while studying for the classes. We are (or just me) trying to find the relative information, mainly from the given sources from the

professors or from the syllabus. While losing ourselves in that literature, sometimes we are forgetting the ‘questioning’. From this point of view, it was really an interesting course.

We think that it would be much better if it would be on-site not online. In that way, it would be much more interactive and much more interesting. As you were participating from different universities from different countries, students are coming from different places. For this course, such differences can create unexpected debates which we think is much more possible in face-to-face communication.

Moreover, we thought that it could be better if the classes would be recorded. We know that there were lots of speakers, and it can be hard to have the permission of all, but we just wanted to say this as a small point. From our perspective, it would be good to be able to turn back, listen again and maybe have it on an accessible platform.