

Transnational Cultural Spaces and Social Remittances between Dubai and Southern Iran

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Abstract

This paper focuses on cultural circulations as a space for the observation and analysis of social remittances between Dubai and southern Iran. The interdependent relations, at the local and transnational levels, that link the fields of cultural and philanthropic practices with the political arena, allows for the examination of cultural circulations as a space of power relations, negotiations, and redefinition of social hierarchies (Levitt 2016). This presentation will underline the agency of migrants involved in the cultural field to consider their role as mediators of ideas, practices, representations of identities, as well as their impact on the modes of political governance notably in the country of origin in Iran. The study of the involved individuals and their cultural activities reveals the autonomy of the migratory space, which on occasion challenges the hierarchical relationship of the country of origin and leads to the redefinition of center-periphery relations. This presentation is a result of a long-term reflection on Iran's relations with its regional environment through the field of cultural and artistic practices. It especially draws on a fieldwork (March to June 2021) that looked at the cultural initiatives of Iranians in the city of Dubai.

Biography

Amin Moghadam is senior research associate at CERC in migration and integration at Toronto Metropolitan University. He holds a PhD in Human Geography and Urban Studies from the University of Lyon II, France. His research and publications have focused on migration policy and practices, diaspora studies, circulation and regional integration in the Middle East, with focus on the Persian Gulf region (Iran and UAE).

Amin acted as an associate research scholar at the Center for Iran and Persian Gulf Studies at Princeton University between 2016-2020. Prior to this position, he lectured on Urban and Migration Studies at Sciences Po Paris, Aix-Marseille University and the Institut National des Langues et Civilisations Orientales (Inalco). In addition to research and teaching, he took on the role of academic advisor for the Master of Public Affairs program at Sciences Po in Paris and

consulted for several organizations such as the Louvre Abu Dhabi and UNHCR. Amin's new research explores ways in which the dynamics of space production in global cities intersect with the politics of housing and home making by emphasizing the role they play in migration trajectories and transnational practices, as well as in processes of class formation and integration in the host society.