

“Islam and the Culture of the State in Oman”

Prof. Fotini Tsibiridou (Macedonia University-Thessaloniki)

How the contemporary “state culture” in the Sultanate of Oman is inspired by the local Islamic “tradition”? This is the main question of the anthropological project carried out in the region for the last 5 years. In this project the ethnographic fieldwork is supported by the historical perspective. The anthropological analysis is in continue dialogue with researchers focusing on the theological and legal study of Islam. “Tradition” is not considered as a stable think but as a dynamic process, through which people are thinking and at the same time are reconstructing it.

In this paper we will draw the hard lines of the research project located to: the study of the Ibadi tradition, in the frame of the broader Islamic one (political power and cosmological principles in everyday practices); the observation of governmental policies, bureaucratic practices, public performances and representations of belonging leading to contemporary citizen’s experiences;

the discourse analysis of the actual leader’s vision and inspiration (Royal speeches of Sultan Qaboos) regarding governmentality practices, peripheries development and the use of the local knowledge.