



UNIVERSITÀ  
DEGLI STUDI DI MILANO-BICOCCA

## COURSE SYLLABUS

### European Cultures and Societies

2021-2-F0101R070

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#### Course title

European Cultures and Societies.

(Un)known Europe.

Dr. Giorgia Decarli \_\_\_\_\_

#### Topics and course structure

For a while anthropology of Europe has been peripheral compared to research areas that, over time, have prestigiously asserted themselves. Since the 1970s - by conforming to both new theoretical paradigms of dynamic anthropology and survey methods - anthropology of Europe has started to stand out as an autonomous and multifaceted field of study. To date, however, large part of its researches tend to favor specific topics against which *Europe* - as a non discrete and thus hardly definable identity - plays a mere scenographic role.

Instead, this teaching tries to bring Europe up. It addresses the complex issue of building an European identity and it especially focuses on two related aspects of such process. On the one side, sociocultural mechanisms and strategies underlying a united Europe's "ethnogenesis" and a "European culture" production are further explored.

On the other side, some hidden faces of this same Europe are placed in the spotlight: islands, territories and societies that - due to their resilient sociocultural, legal and political pluralism -at once disturb the supranational unification process and represent creative testing labs for shared sovereignties.

The leitmotiv of this teaching, therefore, are *invisible Europes*:

United Europe: an ambiguous and incomplete cultural construction, a product of an illusionary reality, of a fictitious history that is built according to a functional selection of segments of past.

Europes that are outside Europe: the array of European islands and territories which are far from the continent and, often, so small and scattered to be even excluded by European cartography (i.e. the image of Europe by definition) and which, nevertheless, accomodate a remarkable variety of cultures, settings and histories.

Europes that are inside Europe, also called "Gypsy" Europes (in this teaching): Roma and Sinti family networks who are likewise scattered but in the heart of the continent and who are similarly excluded by representations of Europe (when not persecuted) due to their dream of living in a world without (supra)nations.

## Objectives

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Knowledge and understanding:

- of the sociocultural fundamentals underling the process of "ethnogenesis" of a united Europe and production of a "European culture";
- of the existence of *invisibile Europes*;
- of critical issues underling the building process of a united Europe;
- of anthropological perspectives on debates and phenomena concerning Europeanism;
- of the contributions that anthropological knowledge brings to the study of European governance.

Applying knowledge and understanding, meant as:

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Making judgements, meant as:

- the capacity to critically question a European identity and culture;
- the capacity to recognize and critically analyze behaviors led by multiple cosmologies and diverse relations with and within the European context;
- ability to identify and contrast forms of marginalization and discrimination.

Communication skills, namely:

- the ability to consciously and critically debate (and to use specific terms relating to) anthropological topics dealing with European identity, unification and culture.

## **Methodologies**

Lectures. The teaching/learning of basic concepts of the discipline is supported by the comparative presentation of numerous ethnographic examples (also taken from the teacher's fieldwork experiences).

## **Online and offline teaching materials**

Due to overlap with an "in class" teaching, lectures are online: both synchronous and async (in this last case they are promptly posted on the course web page, prior to the start of the related class time).

Teaching materials are both on/off-line and include printed material (volumes), scientific articles available online on open access reviews/journals and power point (or pdf) slides to be downloaded.

Materials are listed in the bibliography and/or progressively posted on the web page of the course.

## **Programme and references for attending students**

### **Requirements**

Knowledge of fundamentals of sociocultural anthropology is required for a full understanding of the teaching programme.

### **Programme**

The teaching programme covers:

- an introduction to the evolution of anthropology of Europe as an autonomous discipline;
- a description of anthropological perspectives on the European "ethnogenesis" process and the development of a "European culture";
- a description of sociocultural and legal perspectives developed by anthropology on what will be referred to as *invisible Europes* (i.e. the European overseas and Roma societies living on the continent);
- the fundamentals of sociocultural and legal anthropology on Roma societies living on the European continent).

## **Bibliography.**

*The study of the volumes listed below is not comprehensive. Chapters will be indicated both in class and on the web page of the course along with references to scientific articles whose reading integrates and enriches the recommended bibliography.*

Shore, C. 2000, *Building Europe. The cultural politics of European integration*, London: Routledge.

Kockel, U., M.N.Craith and J.Frykman, 2012, *A Companion to the Anthropology of Europe*, Blackwell Publishing Ltd.

Matras, Y. 2015, *The Romani Gypsies*, Cambridge: Harvard University Press.

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Weyrauch, W.O.1997, Romaniya: An Introduction To Gypsy Lawthe American Journal Of Comparative Law Vol. 45, No. 2, [Symposium On Gypsy Law] (Spring, 1997);

Acton, T.A., 2003, A Three-Cornered Choice: Structural Consequences Of Value-Priorities In Gypsy Law As Amodel For More General Understanding Of Variations In The Administration Of Justice, The American Journal Of Comparative Law, Vol. 51, No. 3

## **Programme and references for non-attending students**

### **Requirements**

Knowledge of fundamentals of sociocultural anthropology is required for a full understanding of the teaching programme.

### **Programme**

The teaching programme covers:

- an introduction to the evolution of anthropology of Europe as an autonomous discipline;
- a description of anthropological perspectives on the European "ethnogenesis" process and the development of a "European culture";
- a description of sociocultural and legal perspectives developed by anthropology on what will be referred to as *invisible Europes* (i.e.the European overseas and Roma societies living on the continent);
- the fundamentals of sociocultural and legal anthropology on Roma societies living on the European continent).

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Shore, C. 2000, *Building Europe. The cultural politics of European integration*, London: Routledge.

Shore, C., A. Black, 1994, "Citizens Europe and the construction of European identity", in: V. Godard, J. Llobera, C. Shore (eds.), *The anthropology of Europe*, Oxford: Berg, pp. 275 - 98.

Kockel, U., M.N.Craith and J.Frykman, 2012, *A Companion to the Anthropology of Europe*, Blackwell Publishing Ltd

Matras, Y. 2015, *The Romani Gypsies*, Cambridge: Harvard University Press

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Grönfors, M. 1986, Social Control And Law In The Finnish Gypsy Community: Blood Feuding As A System Of Justice, *Journal Of Legal Pluralism*, N. 24;

Weyrauch, W.O.1997, Romaniya: An Introduction To Gypsy Lawthe *American Journal Of Comparative Law* Vol. 45, No. 2, [Symposium On Gypsy Law] (Spring, 1997);

Acton, T.A., 2003, A Three-Cornered Choice: Structural Consequences Of Value-Priorities In Gypsy Law As A Model For More General Understanding Of Variations In The Administration Of Justice, *The American Journal Of Comparative Law*, Vol. 51, No. 3

## **Assessment methods**

Due to Covid19 emergency, learning levels are assessed by an oral examination to be taken in telematic form.

The examination deals with the main topics of the teaching program.

The student must be able to demonstrate that she/he:

- has understood the core elements and the main concepts taught in the course;
- is able to appropriately present her/his arguments, according to the anthropological jargon and in a limited amount of time;
- is be able to critically analyze and connect elements of socio-cultural, legal and political anthropology to the debate on European identity, unification and culture.

The exam consists of 3 questions. Each answer is awarded with a score between 0/30 and 10/30. The final mark results from the sum of the scores obtained for each answer.

Evaluation criteria are

- the level of consistency of the answer with the question;
  - ability to synthesize and absence on redundancy;
  - level of in-depth analysis of concepts;
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### **Office hours**

To be arranged with the teacher by email.

### **Programme validity**

Programs validity is for two academic years.

### **Course tutors and assistants**

None

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