UNIVERSITÀ
DEGLI STUDI DI MILANO-BICOCCA

SYLLABUS DEL CORSO

Antropologia Economica e Sviluppo

2122-2-F0101R006

Course title

***The times they're changing*: cultures, knowledge patterns and climate changes**

Topics and course structure

The course introduces to the theoretical instruments of economic anthropology and anthropology of development, as study of intensive and planned change: space of cultural encounter of multiple ideas of space, of time, of belonging and of environment between development actors and "client communities".

The economic dimensions in other cultural contexts will be analyzed in their embeddedness with local moral economy and cultural practices of local populations in these process of globalization and incorporation in carbon economy.

Dynamics of change and of resource management (water, land, seeds, food) are at the core of contemporary reality and will be the focus of the program, with special attention through ethnographic perspective to some main issues: patterns of continuity and disjuncture with the colonial period, contradictions between cultural and environmental dimensions, the cultural reproduction, local patterns of decencies and strategies of autonomy.

A special focus will be devoted to climate changes and the new and old roles of anthropology within accelerated environmental changes, in order to shed light on the following thematic landscapes: the challenge to the Western dichotomy between culture/nature and uncanny character of naturalism, the cultural patterns of denial, the symbolic investment of atmospheric relationships, and the the new set of meanings of human and culture within the Athropocene.

The course faces development projects as socio-cultural events and as encounter between multiple discourses and practices of heterogeneous social actors. Within the context of crisis of development models and of sustainability of mainstream resource management, the program will intersect the disciplinary tools of cultural anthropology studying change with other disciplines, other experts systems and knowledge that pervade development realities. The course will offer specific tools of anthropological analysis: the interface analysis, the actor-oriented approach, the notions of strategy, of moral community, of space of autonomy, of systems of cooperation and commons, of resource management as socio-cultural dynamic.

Through a main focus around water, one of the most relational goods, issues of sustainability, of inequality in the access of resources, of patterns of violence connected to transformations of rural contexts in southern world will be raised. What is the “community” today in development? What is the social life of a project? How to read aid relationships, the institutional and administrative encounter? How can we analyse the contradictions between resource management and environmental relationships?

Through these main questions, the course will tackle the pertinence of local knowledge, incorporated savoir-faire, systems of work and their encounter with new technological and administrative apparatus and with new expert systems.

Within society/environment relations a special focus will be dealt on the new roles of anthropology vis-a-vis climate changes, the cultural meanings of the “weather” changes, local perceptions and strategies of change and the new meaning of human culture in the Anthropocene.

Objectives

The students will acquire the tools and the set of knowledge of the qualitative analysis in facing context of modernizations, generally realm of quantitative perspectives. The problematization of development ideologies, the critic to epistemological models rooted on a nature/culture dichotomy will be the fundament in understanding the dynamics of socio-cultural change.

The study of applied contexts and of resource management, the dynamics of manipulation, co-optation, selection of local populations in projects, the anthropological analysis of institutions are meant to assimilate tools in the work of the anthropologist in institutional contexts.

In order to develop an autonomy of judgement and communicative tools, the course will develop the personal analysis in reading how global dynamics take place at the local level, in understanding ethnographic studies in other languages and in analysing social processes characterized by multiple and heterogeneous social actors.

The students’ capacity in studying will be activated through personal analysis of the texts of the program, written analysis, seminar settings and through a practical exercise of ethnographic analysis of urban ecological context.

The virtual platform of the faculty will be used for literature exchange and interaction around the material of the course.

Methodologies

Lectures will make use of interactive group work on the study of case study, analysis of audi-visual presentations,

use of Power Points.

Online and offline teaching materials

Programme and references for attending students

Olivier De Sardan, JP, 2008, *Antropologia e sviluppo*, Raffaello Cortina, Milano.

Van Aken, M*., 2012, La diversità delle acque. Antropologia di un bene molto comune*, Altravista, Lungavilla.

Van Aken, .M., 2020, Campati per aria, eleuthera, Milano

Dispensa "*Antropologia e cambiamenti ambientali*": raccolta di saggi etnografici, anche in lingua originale, disponibile sulla pagina del corso nella piattaforma informatica del corso da metà Marzo 2021

Programme and references for non-attending students

Olivier De Sardan, JP, 2008, *Antropologia e sviluppo*, Raffaello Cortina, Milano.

Van Aken, M*., 2012, La diversità delle acque. Antropologia di un bene molto comune*, Altravista, Lungavilla.

Van Aken, .M., 2020, Campati per aria, eleuthera, Milano

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Assessment methods

The space of communication of the course will be evaluated *in itinere* through common questions and debates. The oral exam will therefore evaluate the participation of the students to the course through final questions that will allow understanding the acquisition of methodological tools in reading socio-cultural change in modernization contexts.

Attending students are considered those who participate to 75% of the lectures. Those who cannot attend to lectures will study an additional text in the program: it is advised to contact the teacher for general advice around the trajectories and questions of the course program. The faculty virtual platform will help non-attending students to follow at distance the development of the course.

Office hours

by mail appointment: mauro.vanaken@unimib.it

Programme validity

two years

Course tutors and assistants