UNIVERSITÀ
DEGLI STUDI DI MILANO-BICOCCA

COURSE SYLLABUS

Anthropology of Religions

2122-1-F0101R004

Course title

Anthropology of religions

Topics and course structure

The course analyses the main anthropological theories of religion, showing the relations with the epistemological and historical-social context within which these theories have been elaborated.

The anthropological study of religions attends to religious life via the study of everyday practices. Rather than understanding religion as a set of beliefs, anthropologists examine mental and practical behaviours and attitudes that can be defined as "religious". These everyday practices are constituted by many aspects of social life including performance, politics and power, gender and desire.

Objectives

The course aims:

1) to enable master students to understand the role of religion, ritual and magic in the development and structures of societies

2) to show why supernatural has been so important to human beings and how it has been expressed by different cultures across time and space

3) to show the relevance of material dimension in religions

Methodologies

Lectures

Discussion of a selected bibliography

Watching audio-visual materials

Online and offline teaching materials

Programme and references for attending students

The course mainly focuses on the material aspects of religion (body, objects, images, etc.), and takes into consideration religious representations and practices in relation to the social contexts of reference. According to current perspective the course aims to show how each religion needs material elements to refer to in order to affirm its own "truth".

1) a collection of essays uploaded in pdf by the teacher

2) Fabietti U. Materia sacra. Corpi, oggetti, immagini, feticci nella pratica religiosa. Cortina, Milano 2014, pp. 283.

3) A. Brivio, Il vodu in Africa. Metamorfosi di un culto, Viella, Roma 2012.

4) M.Bloch, Da preda a cacciatore, Cortina, 2005

Un libro a scelta tra:

M.Augé, Il dio oggetto, Mimesis edizioni 2016 (1988)

C. Mattalucci Un’etnografia per la conversione. I missionari d’Africa e l’evangelizzazione del Buhaya, 2020

O. Costantini La nostra identità è Gesù Cristo. Pentecostalismo e nazionalismo tra gli eritrei e gli etiopici a Roma, 2019

E. Fabiano, G. Mangiameli (a cura di) Dialoghi con i non umani, Mimesis 2019

U. van LoyenNapoli sepolta. Viaggio nei riti di fondazione di una città 2020

Programme and references for non-attending students

come per i frequentanti con due libri tra quelli a scelta

Assessment methods

Final exam for attending students

Oral examination

The final exam consists of an interview in which the student critically discusses the questions posed by the teacher, trying to put the theme in relation to the texts discussed in the classroom and to the readings indicated in the program. The appropriateness of the lexicon used is of considerable importance.

Office hours

email appointment

Programme validity

Two academic years

Course tutors and assistants

Chiara Calzana

Jacopo Favi