



UNIVERSITÀ
DEGLI STUDI DI MILANO-BICOCCA

COURSE SYLLABUS

Research Methods in Social and Cultural Anthropology

2223-1-F0101R001

Course title

Theories and practices of the anthropological research

Topics and course structure

The course aims to problematize the conditions of fieldwork, analyzing the concrete research activities, the theoretical elaborations and the textual restitutions. It critically discusses the ethnographic practice in the context of the profound changes in the conditions, functions and aims of the research in the contemporary world. It compares the classic monographs with the most recent productions and it combines the analysis of the epistemological and theoretical foundations of the different methods with the examination of the work in the field and of the application of the disciplinary knowledge.

Objectives

The course aims to promote the dialogue between the theoretical reflection and the ethnographic research in an autonomous and creative way. It intends to develop the ability to choose between different methodologies required by the application of the disciplinary knowledge. It intends to provide a solid and systematic knowledge in the field of the anthropological sciences, identifying its methodological specificities, its interdisciplinary connections and its applications. Starting from the analysis of different ethnographic cases, it exercises the transversal and comparative anthropological perspective on the critical analysis of the contemporary societies. The active participation of the student is strongly encouraged.

Methodologies

The course uses diversified methodologies: lectures; class discussions; the use of slides, audiovisual documents provided by the teacher or by the students; participation of researchers presenting their works.

Online and offline teaching materials

Online and offline materials.

Programme and references for attending students

The course critically reflects on the relationship between epistemological foundations, theoretical perspectives and methodological applications in order to analyze the different methods used by anthropology. It compares the modern conception of science with the contemporary scientific acquisitions and focuses on the concrete conditions of the research activities, on the microprocesses of everyday life, on the asymmetry of the ethnographic encounter, on the translations across cultural and linguistic boundaries, on the ethical problems and on the social role of the anthropologist. It articulates, from a historical and from a theoretical point of view, the main methodological problems with the epistemological and ethical options: from the choice of the field and of the object of the research, to the development of the project; from the elaboration of an ethnographic authority, to the relations with the interlocutors; from the production of data (observation questionnaires, interviews, life stories, etc.) to their organization; from the different ethnographic writings (notes, notes, diaries, final text) to the theoretical elaboration and the return of the results of the research to the various interlocutors, internal or external to the academic world.

Texts in English will be provided to students on request.

Programme and references for non-attending students

The program and the bibliography are identical to those offered to attending students. Non-attending students are asked to be able to critically discuss the anthropological research practices. Students are invited to analyze comparatively the classical ethnographies with the contemporary productions, combining their epistemological reflections with the analysis of the conditions of fieldwork.

Assessment methods

The exam aims at verifying the knowledge acquired through the critical study of the texts and the work done in class. It will assess the acquisition of the specific disciplinary language and the ability to articulate and discuss the

topics of the course.

Office hours

Before classes by appointment.

Programme validity

Two academic years

Course tutors and assistants

Dott. Daniele Buonomo

Sustainable Development Goals

QUALITY EDUCATION
