UNIVERSITÀ
DEGLI STUDI DI MILANO-BICOCCA

COURSE SYLLABUS

Cultural Anthropology

2324-1-E2001R007

Course title

Cultural anthropology

Topics and course structure

This is an introduction to cultural anthropology. This discipline was born as the study of a very distant “otherness” – other people, other tribes, other habits – but has now evolved into a critical knowledge of identity processes throughout the world. It questions the construction of identity/difference in a vast array of different social domains.

The course will give a brief overview of the main theoretical currents and objects of study. Its scope is to introduce the students to the fundamental categories of understanding developed within cultural anthropology.

The course also introduces the student to the methodology typical of anthropology, ethnography, and its epistemology.

Through the observation of different cultures anthropology underlines how human lives are constructed by material conditions, social relationships, different imaginary landscapes, historical contingencies and an imponderable personal agency.

Through texts and videos, the course will introduce the students to the main domains of interest in contemprary anthropology: social organization, gender and sexuality, power, violence, resources and exchange.

In the course, we will introduce some of the main anthropologists who worked in the XXth century and contributed to the development of the main interpretive paradigms in the discipline.

We shall also become familiar, through practice and discussion, with the methods of ethnographic enquiry. How to document practices and discourses, emotions, feelings and visions, trying to explicit the “emic perspective” – that

is, the subjects' point of view – and its interplay with larger social forces.

Objectives

Knowledge and comprehension:

The course is meant for first-year students who have hardly any knowledge in anthropology.

At the end of this course, the students are expected to know the basic categories of understanding developed by the discipline.

They should also be familiar with the basic steps of ethnograpy

Methodologies

Lectures, video sessions, practice of ethnographic research. The students will be required to contribute to the lessons through short presentations of texts and discussions.

Online and offline teaching materials

The material will be available during the teaching period.

Programme and references

1) Personal notes.

2) Fabietti, Ugo, 2022, *Elementi di antropologia culturale,* Mondadori tutto tranne parte terza e ottava.

3)Edward E. Evans-Pritchard.2002*.*Stregoneria, oracoli e magia fra gli Azande* . Milano, Raffaello Cortina.

4)Vignato, Silvia. 2020. *Figlie delle catastrofi. Un'etnografia della crescita nella ricostruzione di Aceh*. Milano, Ledizioni.

5. One book chosen from the following list:
   -Staid, Andrea. 2022. Essere natura. Uno sguardo antropologico per cambiare il nostro rapporto con l'ambiente. Milano, Utet.
   -Cecconi, Arianna, 2012. I sogni vengono da fuori. Un'etnografia della notte. Firenze, EditPress.

Assessment methods

Oral examination. Good mastery of basic notions and authors in the discipline are required. The ective use of notions and theoretical frames will be assesed. Participation to in-class activities will be considered iinthe final evaluation.

Expected acquisitions. Attending students. Students are required to relate about notions and materials discussed in class and to read and master the texts listed in the syllabus with no exclusion of parts unless specified.
Non- attending students. Students are required to relate about materials discussed shared online and to read and master the texts listed in the syllabus with no exclusion of parts unless specified.

Office hours

By appointment (arranged either by email or at the end of the lesson)

Programme validity

The reference list is valid only for two years.

Course tutors and assistants

Sustainable Development Goals

GOOD HEALTH AND WELL-BEING | GENDER EQUALITY | REDUCED INEQUALITIES | LIFE ON LAND | PEACE, JUSTICE AND STRONG INSTITUTIONS