



UNIVERSITÀ
DEGLI STUDI DI MILANO-BICOCCA

COURSE SYLLABUS

Anthropology of Religions

2324-1-F0101R004

Course title

Anthropology of religions

Topics and course structure

The course aims to provide theoretical and methodological knowledge regarding the anthropology of religions.

More specifically, the course aims to:

outline the theoretical panorama of anthropological studies on religions and relate them to the epistemological and socio-historical context

deep the religious life via the study of everyday practices

focus on the material aspects of religion (body, objects, fetishes, 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".

Objectives

Through this teaching, with constant and participative attendance of lessons, we intend to promote the following learning, in terms of:

Knowledge and understanding

Students will acquire specific competences on the meanings and the roles of religious concepts and practices in different social and historical context. The focus will be on the materiality of religions

Ability to relate differentiated knowledge and models.

Students will learn to manage the different knowledge and models about religions and its related concepts and connect them to the other fields of the anthropological discipline

Ability to apply knowledge and models

Students will learn to apply knowledge and models learned during the course to the analysis of contemporary societies and will develop an intellectual stance to understand the multiplicity of religious realities.

Methodologies

The course makes use of a variety of methodologies: lectures, class discussions on materials such as texts (including those scheduled for the examination), slides, audiovisual documents provided by the lecturer or autonomously proposed by the students; participation of researchers presenting current research.

Attending students could be involved in short ethnographic projects experiences in order to develop a theoretical discussion.

Online and offline teaching materials

Additional teaching materials to the scheduled texts (background articles, documents, films) will be made available on the course page.

Programme and references

The program is temporary and some texts may be modified.

1. a collection of essays selected by the teacher
2. Fabietti U. *Materia sacra. Corpi, oggetti, immagini, feticci nella pratica religiosa.* Cortina, Milano 2014, pp. 283.
3. A. Brivio, *Serpenti, sirene e sacerdotesse. Antropologia dei mondi acquatici in Africa occidentale,* 2022, Roma Viella

Two books among the following:

R.Strongman, *Divinità queer. Candomblé, Santería e Vodou: transcorporeità nelle religioni dell'atlantico nero,* Mimesis, 2023

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

U. van Loyen, *Napoli sepolta. Viaggio nei riti di fondazione di una città,* Meltemi, 2020

M. Sahlins, *La nuova scienza dell'universo incantato. Un'antropologia dell'umanità (quasi tutta),* Raffaello Cortina editore, 2023

S.De Matteis, *Gli sciamani non ci salveranno,* edizioni Elèuthera, 2023

S.Consigliere, *Materialismo magico. Magia e rivoluzione,* Derive Approdi, 2023

M.Bloch, *Da preda a cacciatore,* Raffaello Cortina editore, 2005

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 (attendant students) 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. This year's programme can therefore be carried over to the winter session in February 2026

Course tutors and assistants

Luis Gregorio Abad Espinoza

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Sustainable Development Goals

NO POVERTY | REDUCED INEQUALITIES
