UNIVERSITÀ
DEGLI STUDI DI MILANO-BICOCCA

COURSE SYLLABUS

Historical Anthropology

2425-2-F0101R065

Course title

Historical anthropology

Topics and course structure

Historical anthropology is a field of study between history and anthropology born out of the realization that societies can only be understood when analyzed historically. Different societies have different conceptions of time, cultures of memory, and historiographies. In order to study social life from a diachronic perspective, historical anthropology combines archival research, ethnography, oral history, analysis of material traces, etc.
The course traces the birth and development of this discipline and presents an overview of its main areas of research.

Objectives

This course, with constant class participation, aims to promote:

- an awareness and understanding of the main theoretical issues in historical anthropology
- the ability to apply anthropological-historical analysis to different cultural settings and to relate different understanding of history to each other
- the ability to apply the knowledge and models of historical anthropology to specific situations and contexts.

Methodologies

The course consists of:
a) Two three-hour lectures in classroom. During the first lecture, the instrctor presents the structure and content of the programme, examination and assessment methods; during the last, she highlights the main topics covered during the course and provides further information on the final examination. A streaming connection is provided to allow non-attending students to participate.
b) Two three-hour on-line lectures. These lectures are designed to promote active learning and student involvement. Through a recorded lecture, the instructor provides students with guidance to carry out an exercise of archival research or the collection of oral sources. During the following lecture devoted to this activity, the instructur respond to the questions posed by the students, guiding the activities in progress. The results of these individual works are presented to the classroom at the end of the course, being assessed for the examination.
c) Fifteen three-hour mix-mode lectures in classroom. These lectures are structured to provide a comprehensive learning experience. In the first part, the instructor delivers a lecture. In the second part, students participate in interactive activities, such as discussing texts (included in the examination program) and/or doing exercises related to the lecture subject.

Online and offline teaching materials

Teaching materials will be available from March.

Programme and references

The course examines the use of oral sources and documents in historical-anthropological research, questions the nature of history, memory, and oral traditions, and analyses the theoretical-methodological specificities of an ethnographic approach to the past.

Bibliography

A) One book to be chosen from:
P. Viazzo, Introduzione all'antropologia storica, Roma-Bari, Laterza, 2000.
A. Coello de la Rosa & J. L. Mateo Dieste, In Praise of Historical Anthropology. Perspectives, Methods and Applications to the Study of Power and Colonialism, New York, Routledge, 2020.

B) A collection of articles and essays (available on the e-learning platform in early March)

C) Two books to choose from:
R. Behar, The Presence of the Past in a Spanish Village, Princeton University Press, Princeton, 2006.
M. Bloch, Apologia della storia, Feltrinelli, Milano 2024.
A. Brivio, Donne, emancipazione e marginalità. Antropologia della schiavitù e della dipendenza in Ghana, Meltemi, Milano, 2019
F. Dei, C. Di Pasquale, F. Cappelletto, Dall'autobiografia alla storia. Le memorie delle atrocità di guerra in Toscana, Pacini, Pisa, 2010.
J. Fabian, Il tempo e gli altri. La politica del tempo in antropologia, Meltemi, Milano, 2021.
C. Ginzburg, Il formaggio e i vermi, Adelphi, Milano, 2019.
C. Mattalucci, Un'etnografia per la conversione. I missionari d'Africa e l'evangelizzazione del Buhaya (Tanzania nord-occidentale), CLUEB, Bologna, 2020.
L. Passerini, Torino operaia e fascismo. Una storia orale, Officina Libraria, Roma, 2024
A. L. Stoler, Along the Archival Grain. Epistemic Anxieties and Colonial Common Sense, Princeton, Princeton

University Press, 2010.

Although this course is held in Italian, for Erasmus students, course material can also be available in English, and students can take the exam in English if they wish to do so

Assessment methods

Attendant students will be based on the following:
A) Active participation in class discussions and exercises. Presentation of the results of the archive exercise and/or collection of oral sources.
B) Oral exam. The evaluation will be based on the understanding of the texts books; the presentation of contents in a clear and synthetic way; the ability to critically analyse and re-elaborate, making connections between assigned texts.

For students who will not attend lectures and carry out the activities proposed during the course, grade will be based on final oral exam only.

Please, contact the course instructor for further advice on the course program.

Office hours

On appointment by e-mail: claudia.mattalucci@unimib.it

Programme validity

Programme validity is two academic years

Course tutors and assistants

Dott.ssa Chiara Calzana: c.calzana@campus.unimib.it

Sustainable Development Goals

QUALITY EDUCATION