UNIVERSITÀ
DEGLI STUDI DI MILANO-BICOCCA

COURSE SYLLABUS

Theoric Models in Anthropology

2425-1-F0101R002

Course title

Theoretical Approaches in Social Anthropology

Topics and course structure

Main theoretical issues, authors and schools in the history of social/cultural anthropology will be presented in this course. Special attention will be given to the emergence of modernity in non-western societies and the effects this has had on social/cultural anthropology.

Objectives

Students will enhance their curiosity about the world, love of learning and a sense of wonder for cultural diversity. Through class debates they will also improve their communication skills. Aim of the course is a better grasping of the role of social and cultural diversities in the contemporary world, as well as a critical assessment of the constructed character of social norms and conventions. Further goal of the course is the awareness of the paradoxes and the epistemological problems inherent anthropological knowledge and field research.

Methodologies

Lectures, films, ethnographic documentaries, class debates on specific topics emerging from assigned reading materials, talks given by experts in specific fields.

All course activities will be class activities.

Online and offline teaching materials

Hints and suggestions for films, books and ethnographic documentaries are to be found in the Avvisi section of elearning.unimib.

Programme and references

Oral exam on two volumes to be defined according to the research interests of the student.

In order to be admitted to the oral exam the student is expected to write and send to luigi.urru@unimib.it at least ten days prior to the oral exam a paper of 2500 words on one of the following:

- Abu-Lughod Lila 1979. Veiled Sentiments. Honour and Poetry in a Bedouin Society. Berkeley: University of California Press.
- Anderson Benedict 1983. Imagined Communities. Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism. London: Verso.
- Appadurai Arjun 1996. Modernity at Large. Cultural Dimensions of Globalization. Minneapolis: Minnesota University Press.
- Clifford James 1988. The Predicament of Culture. Twentieth-Century Ethnography, Literature, and Art. Harvard: Harvard University Press.
- Douglas Mary and Isherwood Baron 1979. The World of Goods. Towards an Anthropology of Consumption. London: Allen Lane.
- Evans-Pritchard Edward 1940. The Nuer. A Description of the Modes of Livelihood and Political Institutions of a Nilotic People. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Fabian Johannes 1983. Time and the Other. How Anthropology Makes Its Object. New York: Columbia University Press.
- Geertz Clifford 1973. The Interpretation of Cultures. New York: Basic Books.
- Goody Jack 2009. The Eurasian Miracle. Cambridge: Polity.
- Herzfeld Michael 1993. The Social Production of Indifference. Exploring the Symbolic Roots of Western Bureaucracy. Chicago: University of Chicago Press].
- Hobsbawm Eric and Ranger Terence 1983. The Invention of Tradition. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Holmes Douglas 1989. Cultural Disenchantments. Worker Peasantries in Northeast Italy. Princeton: Princeton University Press.
- Leach Edmund 1954. Political Systems of Highland Burma. A Study of Kachin Social Structure. London: Athlone.
- Sahlins Marshall 1985. Islands of History. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
- Turner Victor 1967. The Ritual Process. Structure and Anti-Structure. London: Aldine.

Assessment methods

Oral examination, once the student has submitted the written essay.
Evalutation criteria: thoroughness of preparation, clarity of language, ability to connecting various topics, and critical approach.

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

Office hours

Building U6 Agorà, fourth floor, room 4126,
Thursday 10th April 2025, 9 a.m.

or by appointment.

Programme validity

Teaching programmes are valid for two academic years.

Course tutors and assistants

dott. Andrea Apollonio

Sustainable Development Goals

QUALITY EDUCATION